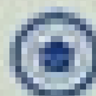
Anecdotes for Reflection





THE
WORLD
FEDERATION
OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

Anecdotes for Reflection

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Part-١

point

Moral stories from the lives of the prophets, the Ahlul Bayt, and their companions. .Includes topics such as sincerity, hope, altruism, and independence

Foreword

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

The concept of morality has existed since the creation of mankind. In the old days, there was a clear distinction between 'good' morals and 'bad' morals although people did not always follow the former. During modern times, the distinction between good and bad has become blurred and morality has been significantly diluted. As a result, .there is a danger that immorality will prevail over morality throughout the world

There is no excuse for a Muslim to get caught in this quagmire. There is clear guidance from God through Holy Qur'an and the Prophets and Ma'soomeen. Prophet Muhammad himself said, "I have been sent as a Prophet for the purpose of perfecting the morals." One of the best ways of understanding morality is by studying practical .examples from the lives of Prophets and Ma'soomeen

A few books have been written on moral stories emanating from the Islamic world, one of them being ‘Pearls of Wisdom’, published by the Islamic Education Board of World Federation in March ۱۹۹۳. Bearing in mind the importance of the subject of Akhlaaqiyat, IEB–WF is publishing ‘Anecdotes for Reflection’ in ۵ parts. The

source of this publication is the book 'Yaksad Mawzu' wa ۵۰۰ Dastan' by Sayyid Ali Akber Sadaaqat. The translation from Farsi to English was carried out by Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi. IEB – WF would like to thank Sayyid Ali Akber Sadaaqat and Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi for their efforts and we pray to Allah s.w.t. to reward them amply.

May Allah s.w.t. accept this work as a further attempt by IEB – WF to propagate Islam.

Islamic Education Board

The World Federation of K S I Muslim Communities

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Introduction

In The Name Of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Compassionate

There are numerous ways for man to achieve guidance and emerge from darkness and move towards light. God, for the prosperity of man and perfection of his morals, has created proofs, evidences and vestiges,(۱) so great in number that they are beyond reckoning and computation. For the guidance of mankind, He sent the Prophets with Clear Proofs,(۲) Books, Miracles and Signs so that, perhaps, the people might perceive the right path and attain prosperity and success.

During the entire period of his prophethood, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), with regards to refinement of souls and perfection of morals, was an exemplar in speech and deed, and had (even) said, "I have been sent (as a Prophet) for (the purpose of) perfecting the morals"(۳)

Man's problem lies in his disregard for virtues, acquisition of vices, inclination towards lust and obedience to the Shaytan. Some men stoop so low that they even lead their

۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Ibrahim (۱۴), vs. ۵ وَ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنا مُوسى بِآياتِنا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَکَ مِنَ الظُّلُماتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

۲- Ibid, ch. Al-Hadeed (۵۷), vs. ۲۵ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنا رُسُلَنا بِالْبَيِّناتِ وَ أَنْزَلْنا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتابَ وَ الْمِيزانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

۳- Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱۱. بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكارِمَ الْأَخْلاقِ

lives akin to animals. For the purpose of refinement and treatment of human morals, abatement of rebelliousness and controlling the natural disposition, the Holy Prophet .spared no effort and mentioned all that was necessary in this regard

Attainment of prosperity in this world and the hereafter is only accomplished under the auspices of a teacher and, at the same time, not every person can completely identify the two extremes of moral behaviour in order to demonstrate the moderate and balanced path. God, Who is the Absolute Wise, introduced all the Prophets, especially the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), as the 'teacher and trainer' of morals, so that the people, by following in his footsteps, distance themselves from vices and acquire the .honour of the two worlds

The Narratives), which) اَلقَصَص In the Qur'an, there exists a chapter by the name of .itself is proof that man is in need of stories and narratives

In many places in the Qur'an, stories of Prophets, kings and nations have been mentioned. In addition, God has presented issues pertaining to wars, peace, family, religion, society and other similar topics, in the form of stories and narratives. By reading these accounts, the people can comprehend and distinguish the paths of .progress and regress, and ascent and descent in every field, especially morals

The entire chapter Yusuf has been devoted to the story of Yusuf, Ya'qub, Zulaikha :and the brothers. In the beginning of the Chapter, God says

We narrate to you (O' Prophet) the most excellent of the narratives by

(means of) what We have revealed to you this Qur'an [1]

:While, in the concluding verse of this very chapter, He says

(Indeed (there) in the histories of theirs, is a lesson for men of understanding[2]

Indeed, one of the distinguished feats of the Qur'an is this very story of Yusuf (a.s.), which it refers to as the 'best of the narratives', and at the end of which, it says: In these stories there is a lesson for those, who desire to take a moral and adopt the .path of the Perfect Men

In this regard, Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.), in Nahjul Balaghah, says to his son Imam :(.Hasan (a.s

Even though I have not reached the age, which those before me have, yet I have looked into their behaviour and reflected over the events of their lives. I walked amongst their ruins till I was as one of them. In fact, by virtue of those of their affairs that have become known to me, it is as though I have lived with them from the first to the last. I have therefore been able to discern the impure from the clean and the benefit from the harm. I have selected for you the choicest of those matters and .collected for you their good points while keeping away from you the useless ones

Years ago, I had written a book on ethics (for the treatment of vices), by the name of Ihyaa al-Quloob. Ever since, I had been reflecting over the idea

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۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Yusuf (۱۲), vs. ۳ نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِما أَوْحَيْنا إِلَيْكَ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ

۲- Ibid, vs. ۱۱۱ لَقَدْ كانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبابِ

of compiling a book on moral stories. It so happened that, divinely, an opportunity came up before me and with it the motivation for undertaking this assignment. In spite of the lack of necessary books, I contented myself with those that were available and commenced the compilation of this book, recording four to five stories .for every topic

I have certainly not come across any book which has been compiled in this fashion. Books like Namunah-e-Ma'arif-e-Islam and Pand-e-Taareekh have been present for around ۳۰ years and I have made use of them too (in the course of this collection), but in those books, Qur'anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies have all been accumulated together; whereas, I have sought to satisfy myself by mentioning only the stories, while abstaining from presenting considerations relating to Qur'anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies, which would not only have increased the size of the book but would also have made it difficult to understand for many of the readers. This collection caters for the general public, young and old alike, who are acquainted with basic reading and writing. As far as possible, I have endeavoured to omit scientific issues and those aspects, pertaining to traditions, whose .comprehension would be demanding and exacting for the general masses

Although some of the stories may not possibly possess any aspect of reality and actuality, what I have focused on is the admonition and 'taking-a-lesson' aspect contained in them, which hopefully, the honourable readers would

.perceive and comprehend

As far as the issue of associating a story to a particular topic is concerned, I do not claim that the stories allude to just one topic or that particular one which has been specified here; rather, there are stories which can be associated with several other .topics too, in addition to the topic under which it has been mentioned here

When narrating a text or presenting a translation, I have not restricted myself to the literal meaning but, for a better comprehension, have resorted to paraphrasing, .allusion and conceptual explanation too

To avoid interference of topics with one another and prolongation of discussion, I have refrained from bringing forth topics which are related to those already presented. For example, Ithaar (altruism) has been presented as one of the topics but .Infaaq (spending in the path of God) has been excluded

To prevent the reader from experiencing exhaustion and boredom, and for the sake of variety, I have desisted from presenting stories of a monotonous kind, like those of philosophers and poets, but have strived to make the collection varied. In this way, .the readers will, hopefully, derive a greater pleasure from the narratives

In view of the fact that trustworthiness ought to be adhered to, I have referred every narrative presented here, to the book from which it has been extracted, also mentioning the volume and page. It is only with the objective of achieving a greater fluency of work that I have endeavoured to correct, polish or alter

.some of the words or sentences of the original text

It is hoped that the readers, after going through the stories and narratives, reflect upon and take lessons from them so that they are able to create within themselves, a new impetus towards perfection of morals; and God Willing, those who are endowed with laudable morals, should relate them to others, for rectification and remedy of the .weaker souls

Sayyid Ali Akbar Sadaaqat

.And our final prayer (is): All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds

.Mordad, ۱۳۷۸

Morals .۱

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

اِنَّکَ لَعَلی خُلُقٍ عَظِیمٍ

(And certainly, you stand on sublime morality.)(۱)

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

بُعِثتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَکَارِمَ الْاخلَاقِ

(I have been sent (as a Prophet) to perfect the morals.(۲)

Short Explanation

For man, good morals bring grace and elegance in this world, and relief and happiness in the hereafter. They elevate a person's status in proximity to God and aid him in the perfection of his religion. All the Prophets, auliya, and the chosen ones of God possessed exemplary morals and every believer ought to adorn himself with such morals, in order that his Scales of deeds become weightier on the Day of Judgement. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: The Haatim of our time is one, who possesses good

morals. Bad morals cause a person to suffer the squeezing of the grave and the .(punishment of) hell (in the hereafter), and a lack of friends in this world

Man should not be measured according to his knowledge, wealth or

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.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Qalam, vs. ۴ -١

Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ١, pg. ٢٣ -٢

position, but rather, according to his commendable attributes, which make him (acceptable in the eyes of God and distinguished and praised in the eyes of people.(١

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and Noa'imaan (١

Noa'imaan Ibn A'mr Ansaari was one of the early companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and had a jovial and jocose nature. It has been reported that a tribal Bedouin once arrived in Madinah and, resting his camel behind the mosque, entered inside to .(.be in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w

Some of the Prophet's companions incited Noa'imaan by saying, " If you kill this camel, we could distribute its meat amongst ourselves, and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) ".would have to pay its price to the owner

Following their advice, Noa'imaan killed the animal. When the owner came out of the mosque and discovered his dead camel, he was furious and decided to bring the matter to the attention of the Holy Prophet. Noa'imaan, in the meantime, had taken .flight

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) came out of the mosque, saw the dead camel and inquired, "?"Who is responsible for this act

Those around him accused Noa'imaan so the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) despatched someone to bring Noa'imaan before him. Word spread around that Noa'imaan was hiding in the house of Dhubaa'h Bint Zubair,(٢) which was near the mosque. He had climbed into a pit and covered himself with fresh grass. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was told about Noa'imaan's hideout and he and his companions set out towards Dhubaa'h's house. Once there, the

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.Tadhkirah al-Haqaiq, pg. ٥٧ -١

She was the cousin of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) and -٢ the wife of Miqdad Ibn al-Aswad

envoy revealed Noa'imaan's hideaway to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), who ordered him to uncover the pit. When it was done, Noa'imaan emerged, his cheeks and forehead covered with fresh grass. On seeing him, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked:

"O' Noa'imaan! What is this that you have done?"

He replied, "O' Prophet of Allah! By Allah! Those people who have led you to my hiding-place,were the same ones who persuaded me to kill the camel."

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) smiled and brushed away the grass from Noa'imaan's cheeks and forehead with his holy hands. He then paid the price of the camel to the Bedouin(۱) on Noa'imaan's behalf.

۲) Khuzaimah and the Roman Emperor

Khuzaimah Abrash, the Arabian king, never embarked upon any task without first conferring with the Roman Emperor who was one of his closest friends. Once, with the intention of seeking the Emperor's opinion regarding his children's fortune, he sent a letter to him with his herald. In the letter, he wrote:

"I feel I should set aside great riches for each of my sons and daughters in order that they do not fall into bad times after me. What is your opinion in this affair?"

The Roman Emperor replied: "Wealth is a sweetener - unfaithful and impermanent! The best service for your children would be to embellish them with good morals and laudable attributes, which will lead to permanent leadership in the world and forgiveness (of sins) in the hereafter."(۲)۱۱

۳) The Conduct of Imam Sajjad

Once, a relative of Imam Sajjad (a.s.) approached the Imam (a.s.) and

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۱- Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ۲۶

۲- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۶۴; Jawaame' al-Hikaayaat, pg. ۲۷۰.

began to revile and insult him. The Imam (a.s.) did not utter a word in reply but, after the man had left the gathering, he turned to the people around him and said:

"You heard what this man said. Now I want you to accompany me andhear what I have to say in response to his abuses and insults."

The companions complied, "We shall surely accompany you; in fact we had hoped that youwould reply to him at that very moment."

The Imam (a.s.) set off towards the person's house and was heard reciting the following Qur'anic verse:

And who restrain (their) anger, and forgive (the faults of) men; for God loves those (who do good (to others).(1)

The narrator says: " When we heard the recitation of this verse, we realized that the Imam (a.s.) intended to exhibit goodness towards the person who had just insulted him."

When he reached the person's house, the Imam (a.s.) called out to him and announced his arrival.

On seeing the Imam, the person immediately assumed that he had come to respond to his abuses.

However, as soon as the Imam (a.s.) saw the man, he said, "O' Brother! You came to me and uttered things which were appalling and unpleasant. If what you have attributed to meis true, I seek forgiveness for myself from God, but if it is not so, then I pray that God forgives you."

The man was shocked to hear these words and repented. He kissed Imam Sajjad (a.s.) between the eyes and

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١- Holy Qur'an, ch. Aale I'mraan (٣), vs. ١٣۴.

:apologised, saying

My insults and abuse were unfounded and cannot be attributed to your character. In“ fact, those insults befit me more than you.”(۱)۱۳

Imam 'Ali and the Discourteous Trader (۴

Imam Ali (a.s.), during his Calphate, would often undertake tours to survey the markets and advise and guide the traders there.

One day, while passing through the date market, he noticed that a small girl was weeping. Imam asked her the reason for her tears at which she explained:

My master had given me a dirham to purchase some dates. I purchased them from“ this trader here, but when I returned home, my master did not approve of them. Now I wish to return them but the trader refuses to take them back.”

Imam 'Ali (a.s.), turned to the trader and said to him, “This child is a slave-girl and has no authority of her own. Take back the dates and return her money to her.”

The trader stepped forward and, in full view of the other traders and onlookers, struck the Imam (a.s.) on the chest in an attempt to shove him away from the front of his shop.

The people who were witnessing the incident, rushed forward and said to the man:

“What do you think you are doing? This is Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.)!”

The trader’s face went pale as he stood flabbergasted. He immediately took the dates from the girl and handed back the money to her.

Then, turning to the Imam (a.s.), he implored, “O’ Amirul Mu'mineen! Be pleased with me and forgive

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۱- Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ۲, pg. ۴.

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The Imam replied, "I shall only be pleased with you when you change your behaviour for the better and pay close attention to morals and courtesy."(1)

5) Maalik Ashtar

Once, Maalik Ashtar was passing through the market of Kufah looking very indigent. He was dressed in coarse canvas apparel and had placed canvas on his head instead of a turban. One of the traders was sitting in his shop when his eyes fell upon Maalik. He looked at him with contempt and scornfully hurled a lump of earth towards him.

Maalik disregarded him and proceeded on his way. However, a person who had recognized Malik and had witnessed the incident, reprimanded the trader:

"Shame on you! Do you know who you have just humiliated?"

"No," replied the trader.

"He was Maalik Ashtar, the companion of 'Ali (a.s)."

A shiver ran through the body of the trader at the thought of the evil deed he had committed. He immediately set off after Maalik in order to offer his apologies. He noticed that Maalik had entered a mosque where he was engaged in prayers and decided to wait for him. As soon as Maalik had finished praying, the trader fell at his feet and began kissing them. Maalik raised him and asked him what he was doing.

" I am apologizing for the sin I have committed," answered the trader.

Maalik explained, "There is no sin upon you. By God, I came to the mosque especially to seek forgiveness for you."(2)

۱- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۶; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۹, pg. ۵۱۹.

۲- Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۱۲; Majmua'h Warraam Ibn Abi Farraas.

Beneficence .۲

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إنَّ اللهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوا وَ الَّذِينَ هُم مُحسِنُونَ

Surely Allah is with those who guard (against evil) and those who do good (to others).(۱)

:Imam 'Ali (a.s.) has stated

عاَتِب اَخاَكَ بِالإِحساَنِ اِلَيهِ

(Admonish your brother (in faith) by exhibiting kindness towards him.)(۲)

Short Explanation

Allah loves the person who possesses the attribute of beneficence. Just as Allah has exhibited kindness towards us, it is essential for us to exhibit a greater beneficence towards others.

Even if a person has wronged us, we should respond with kindness and not repay evil with evil, as this would only add fuel to the fire and cause an increase in malice and enmity.

The conduct of Divine personalities was such that if they were greeted, they would return the greeting in a better and more complete manner and if goodness was done to them, they would repay it, augmented and amplified.

Those who do goodness and exhibit beneficence towards others, attract the hearts of the people, while their deeds hurt Shaytan.

It should be noted that those who do good do not devalue or spoil their kind deeds by placing any kind of obligation (upon the person towards whom kindness is exhibited).

Imam Husain's Kindness to the Camel-Driver (۱

:Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said

A man was trailing a woman when she was busy circling the Ka’bah. The woman was“ raising her hands in prayer when the man placed his hand upon her arm; at that .moment God glued his hand to the women’s arm

People thronged to witness this strange happening in such great numbers that

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۱- .Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Nahl (۱۶), vs. ۱۲۸

۲- .Nahjul Balaghah (Faidh al-Islam), pg. ۱۱۶۵

all movement was hindered. A person was sent to the Emir of Makkah to inform him of the incident. He gathered all the scholars around him and together they tried to settle on a suitable resolution to the problem. Many ordinary people also assembled, .interested to know the sentence that would be pronounced for this crime

As they all stood perplexed over the issue, the Emir finally said, "Is there anyone from "?the family of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w) here

".Those around him said, "Yes! Husain Ibn 'Ali (a.s.) is here

That night, the Emir ordered the Imam (a.s.) to be brought before him. He sought to .(.know the ruling for this incident from the Imam (a.s

First, the Imam (a.s.) turned towards the Ka'bah and raised his hands. He stood in this position for a while, after which he supplicated. Then, approaching the man the Imam .separated his glued hand from the arm of the woman by the power of his Imamate

"?The Emir asked the Imam (a.s.), "O' Husain (a.s.)! Should I not punish him

.(.No," replied the Imam (a.s"

The author says: This was the kindness which the Imam (a.s.) had exhibited towards the camel-driver, but it was the same person who repaid this act of kindness by cutting off the Imam's hands in order to snatch his (a.s.) belt, in the darkness of the (night of ۱۱th Muharram.(۱

Abu Ayyub Ansaari (۲

Abu Ayyub Ansaari was one of the distinguished companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). When the Holy

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.Raahnama-e-Sa'adat, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۶; Shajarah-e-Tuba, pg. ۴۲۲ -۱

Prophet (s.a.w.) migrated from Makkah to Madinah, all the tribes of Madinah :requested him to stay with them, but he said

".The place where I stay shall depend on where my camel sits down"

When the procession reached a place near the houses of Bani Maalik Ibn Najjar, which later came to house the door of the Prophet's mosque, the camel sat down to rest. But a short while later it stood up again and began to walk, only to return and .rest at the place where it had previously rested

The people began approaching the Holy Prophet (s.a.w), and inviting him to be their guest. Seeing this, Abu Ayyub immediately lifted the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.) saddlebag .from the camel's back and carried it into his own house

When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) noticed that the saddlebag was missing, he inquired, "?"What has happened to the saddle-bag

.Those around him informed him that Abu Ayyub had taken it into his own house

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) remarked: "A person should alwaysaccompany his luggage," and then proceeded into Abu Ayyub's house and stayed there till the time when the .houses around the mosque were constructed

Initially, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was accommodated in a room on the ground floor, :whereas Abu Ayyub occupied the top storey, but later, he requested

O' Messenger of Allah! It is unbecoming that you stay below, while we occupy the top" ".storey; it would be more appropriate if you were to move to the top

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) agreed and

.asked for his things to be moved to the top

Abu Ayyub was in the ranks of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and participated in battles like Badr and Uhud, fighting against the enemies of Islam and putting on a scintillating .exhibition of valour and courage

One night, on the way back home after victory in the battle of Khaibar, Abu Ayyub .(.stayed awake the entire night, guarding the tent of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w

"?When morning dawned, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) inquired: "Who is out there

.It's me, Abu Ayyub," came the reply"

"!The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) twice said, "May Allah exhibit mercy upon you

Thus, Abu Ayyub, through the kindness he showed to the Prophet, both with his money and his soul, became the beneficiary of this supplication of the Holy Prophet ((s.a.w.).(۱

Recompense for the Poems (۳

One Nawroz day, Mansur Dawaaniqi, the Abbasid Caliph who took over the caliphate after his brother Abu al-A'bbas Saffaah, ordered Imam Musa Kadhim (a.s.) to present himself in the gathering of the Eid of Nawroz. This was so that the people could come .and greet him and offer their gifts to him, which he should accept

The Imam (a.s.) told Mansur, "Nawroz is the customary Eid of the Iranians and nothing ".has been said about it in Islam

To which Mansur replied, "This act is politically motivated and is intended to keep my soldiers happy. I place you under the oath of the Great God that you accept my ".request and present yourself at that gathering

The Imam (a.s.) agreed and arrived

.Payghambar Wa Yaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۰-۲۷; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۶, pg. ۵۵۴ -۱

at the assembly. The army generals, nobles and the common masses arrived in his august presence, greeted him, and presented their gifts to him.

In the meantime, Mansur had ordered one of his slaves to position himself near the Imam (a.s.) and maintain a record of the money and gifts presented to him. The last person who had come to meet the Imam (a.s.) was an old man, who said to him:

"O' Son of the Messenger of Allah! I am an impoverished person and lack the money to present you with gifts, but my gift for you today are three verses of elegy, which my grandfather had composed for your grandfather, Husain Ibn Ali(a.s.)."

Having said this, he then recited the verses.(١)

The Imam (a.s.) responded appreciatively, saying, "I have accepted your gift," after which he prayed for the man.

Then, turning to the slave, he instructed, "Go to Mansur, inform him of these gifts and ask him what has to be done about them?"

The slave did as he was told and upon returning, said to the Imam (a.s.):

"The Caliph has said: I have given them to you (Imam Musa Kadhim) as gifts. Spend them as you desire."

The Imam (a.s.) told the old man, "Take these riches and gifts, for I am giving them all to you as gifts."(٢)

۴) Prophet Yusuf and his Brothers

Years after the incident when the brothers of Yusuf (a.s.) had deceptively taken him outside the city, beaten him and flung him into the well thereby forcing their father into perpetual weeping and

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١- عَجِبتُ لِمَصقُولٍ عَلاَکَ فِرِندُهُ   یَوْمِ الْهِیاَجِ عَلاَکَ غُبَار

.Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۸۷ -۲

anguish over his loss, the brothers heard that Yusuf had become the king of Misr. .They and their father went to meet him

The very first sentence which Yusuf uttered upon seeing them, was: And He was (indeed kind to me when He took me out of the prison.(١)

Apparently, it was out of courtesy that Yusuf desisted from mentioning the troubles he had experienced; first being flung into the well, then his subsequent slavery and then unpleasant incidents, which he had to endure due to the acts of his brothers. He did not wish to revive those bitter memories, which would cause them to experience .mortification and embarrassment

He then added, "It was Shaitan who incited my brothers to commit those inappropriate deeds towards me, hurling me into the well and separating me from my father; however, the Glorious God exhibited kindness towards me in that he made "!those very acts a means for granting eminence and reverence to our family

Attributing the unjust acts of his brothers to Shaytan and regarding him as the prime culprit for the crimes of his brothers, was another example of Yusuf's (a.s.) magnanimity. He thus shielded them from embarrassment and left them with an .opportunity to apologize for their deeds

:He said

"There shall be no reproof against you, (from) this day(٢) You can rest assured with respect to me, for I have forgiven you and chosen to disregard all that has happened previously, and on behalf of God too, I can give you this good news

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١- Holy Qur'an, ch. Yusuf (١٢), vs. ١٠٠.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Yusuf (١٢), vs. ٩٢.

and seek from Him that Allah may forgive you and He is the Most Merciful of the .(merciful(۱

Surely he who guards (against evil) and is patient (is rewarded(۲)) for surely Allah“ (does not waste the reward of those who do good.”(۳

Author’s note: The lesson, which Hadhrat Yusuf (a.s.) taught everyone, was that of exhibiting kindness and beneficence in response to evil behaviour, and hopefully, we too can conduct ourselves in the same manner with respect to our brethren-in-faith, .Inshaallah

Sincerity.۳

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَاعْبُدِ اللهَ مُخْلِصاً لَهُ الدِّيْن

((So worship God (alone), being sincere to Him in religion(۴)

:Imam Ali (a.s.) said

أَخْلِصِ الْعَمَلَ يُجْزِكَ مِنْهُ الْقَلِيْلُ

Perform your deeds with sincerity, for (then, even) a slight of it shall be sufficient for (you.(۵

Short Explanation

Sincerity is the key to the acceptance of all deeds. A person whose deeds are accepted by Allah, however trivial they may be, is a sincere person and one whose .deeds, in spite of being plentiful are rejected by Allah, is not of the sincere ones

A sincere person strives to purify his soul from vices and exerts himself to perform .(good) deeds and maintain (sincerity of) intention so that Allah accepts his deeds

The level of intention, knowledge and deeds is related to spiritual purification and

refinement, and if a sincere person were to pay due attention to his inner self, he would come to perceive the true concept of Unity of God. The lowest degree of sincerity is when a person exerts himself to the best of

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۱- Ibid, vs. ۹۲.

۲- Ibid, vs. ۹۰ مَن يَتَّقِ وَ يَصبر فإنَّ اللهَ لاَ يُضِيعُ اَجرَ الْمُحسِنِين

۳- Taareekh-e-Anbiya, pg. ۳۳۴-۳۴۷.

۴- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Zumar (۳۹), vs. ۲.

۵- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۰۴.

his ability, neither anticipating rewards for his deeds nor attaching any importance to (them.(1

Three Persons in a Cave (1

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has related

Three persons from the tribe of Bani Israel got together and started out on a" journey. On the way, clouds gathered above them and it started to pour with rain and .so they sought shelter in a nearby cave

Suddenly, a large boulder slipped and blocked the entrance to the cave, trapping the three inside and transforming the day into a dark night for them. They had no other .alternative except to turn to God for help

Let us use our sincere deeds as a means to obtain deliverance from this" .predicament," suggested one of them

.All the others agreed with the suggestion

One of them said, "O' Lord! You are aware that I have an extremely attractive cousin and that I was infatuated and obsessed with her. One day, finding her alone, I took hold of her and wanted to satisfy my carnal desires, when she spoke out to me saying: O' My cousin!Fear God and do not harm my chastity'. Hearing this, I crushed my lustful tendencies anddecided against the evil act. O' Lord! If that deed of mine had been out of absolute sincerityand only for the purpose of acquiring Your pleasure, deliver us from grief and perdition." Suddenly they witnessed that the huge boulder had moved .away a little, faintly brightening up the interior of the cave

The second person spoke out,"O' Lord! You know that

.Tadhkirah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ٧٣ -١

I had a father and a mother, so old that their bodies had bent over due to their excessive age, and that I used to tend to them regularly. One night, having brought them their food, I observed that both of them were asleep. I passed the entire night near them, the food in hand, without waking them up for fear of disturbing them. O' Lord! If this deed of mine had been only for the sake of Your pleasure and happiness, open up a way for us and grant us salvation."

As he completed his speech, the group noticed that the boulder had moved aside a little more.

The third person supplicated, "O' Knower of every hidden and manifest! You know Yourself that I had a worker who used to work for me. When his term had reached its termination, I handed over to him his wages, but he was not pleased and desired more and, in a state of dissatisfaction and displeasure, he went away. I used his wage to purchase a goat, which I looked after separately and very soon I had a flock in my possession. After a period of time,the worker again approached me for his wage and I pointed towards the flock of sheep.Initially, he thought I was ridiculing him, but later, realizing my seriousness, took the entireflock and left.(١) O' Lord! If this act had been prompted by sincerity and had only been for

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١ – In the book Mahaasin, it has been mentioned that his wage was half a dirham but when he returned to collect it, he was given eighteen thousand times over!

".Your pleasure, deliver us from this quandary

At this point the entire boulder moved aside from the mouth of the cave and all three (emerged from it, joyous and ecstatic, and continued their journey.(١

Ali on the Chest of Amr (٢

A'mr Ibn A'bd Wudd was a warrior who, in battle, was a match for a thousand soldiers. In the battle of Ahzaab, he challenged the Muslim soldiers to fight him but none possessed the courage to stand up before him till Imam Ali (a.s.) presented himself .before the Holy Prophet (sa.w) and sought permission to fight him

".The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said to Ali, "Do realize that this is A'mr Ibn A'bd Wudd

Imam Ali (a.s.) humbly stated, "(And) I am Ali Ibn Abi Talib,"and then proceeded .towards the battle-field and stood before A'mr

After a fierce encounter, Imam Ali (a.s.) eventually knocked him down and sat on his (chest.(٢

Witnessing this, the entire Muslim army importuned the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.): "O' ".Messenger of Allah, order Ali (a.s.) to kill A'mr immediately

Leave him alone for he is more aware of his deeds than anyone else," replied the" (.Holy Prophet (s.a.w

When Ali (a.s.) had severed the head of A'mr, he brought it to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), who questioned him (peace be upon him), "O' Ali! What caused you to hesitate before "?killing A'mr

He said, "O' Messenger of Allah! When I had floored him, he abused me, as a result of which I was overcome by rage. I feared that if I were to kill him in that

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Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ١, pg. ٥٣; Farajun Ba'd al-Shiddah, pg. ٢٣; Mahaasin-e- - ١

.Barqi, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۵۳

Mowlana, in his Mathnawi, has composed a poem over the incident, which is as - ۲ follows: از علی آموز اخلاص عمل شیر حق را دان منزه از دغل در غزا بر پهلوانی دست یافت زود شمشیر برآورد و شتافت او خدو انداخت بر روی علی افتخار هر نبی و هر ولی

state of anger, it would be for consoling myself and pacifying my soul. So I stepped away from him till my fury subsided when I returned to sever his head from his body ".only for the happiness of Allah and in obedience to Him

It was because of this sincerity and invaluable combat on the part of Imam Ali that the :Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

The strike of the sword of Ali on the day of the battle of Khandaq is superior to the" (worship of all men and jinn.(۱)(۲

Shaitan and the Pious Worshipper (۳

In the tribe of Bani Israel, there once lived a pious worshipper. One day, the people informed him that at a certain location, there existed a tree that was being worshipped by a tribe. When he heard this, the man flew into a rage, picked up his axe .and set out to cut down the tree

Iblees, appearing before him in the form of an old man, asked, "Where are you headed for?" He replied, "I intend to cut down the tree, which is being worshipped so (that the people worship Allah instead."(۳

.Hold yourself till you hear what I have to say," said Iblees to him"

.The worshipper urged him to carry on

Iblees continued, "God has His own Prophets and if it had been essential to cutdown ".the tree, He would have sent them to perform the task

.However, the worshipper did not agree with Iblees and continued on his way

There is no way I shall let you do it," said Iblees"

۱- ضَرْبَهُ عَلِيٍّ يَوْمَ خَنْدَق أَفْضَلُ مِنْ عِبَادَهِ الثَّقَلَيْن

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۹۹; Anwaar al-Nu'maaniyyah; A'in al-Hayaah -۲

٣ – Iblees means the ‘carnal soul’, while the pious worshipper alludes to the ‘pure innate and soul’.

angrily, and he began to wrestle with the man. In the ensuing contest, the pious .worshipper hurled Iblees onto the ground

Wait! I have something else to say to you", pleaded Iblees. "Listen! You are a poor" man. If you could possess some wealth by means of which you could give alms to the other worshippers it would be much better than cutting the tree. If you refrain from ".cutting the tree, I shall place two dinars beneath your pillow everyday

The pious person said thoughtfully, "If you speak the truth, I shall give one dinar in charity while the other dinar I shall put to my use. This is better than cutting down the tree; in any case, I have neither been ordered to perform this task nor am I a Prophet ".to burden myself with unnecessarygrief and anxiety

.Thus, he acceded to the request of Shaitan who left him alone

For two days, he received the two dinars and utilized them, but on the third day, there was no sign of the money. Upset and distressed, he picked up his axe and set out to .cut down the tree

"?On the way, he encountered Shaitan, who asked him: "Where are you headed for

".I am going to cut that tree"

.There is no way you are going to do it," said Shaitan"

Once again they began to contest, but this time Iblees overcame him and hurling him to the ground, ordered, "Turn back or I shall sever your

".head from your body

The pious man said, "Leave me alone and I shall return, but tell me, how was it that I "?hadmanaged to overcome you on the previous occasion

Iblees answered, "On that occasion, you had set out only for Allah and you were sincere in your intention as a result of which, Allah subjugated me for you, but this time you were angry for your own self and for your dinars and so I could overpower (you."(١

The Secret of a Sincere Slave (۴

:Sa'eed Ibn Musayyab narrates

One year, there was a severe famine and so the people gathered together to pray" for the rains. I looked around and my eyes fell upon a black slave, who had separated himself from the crowd and emerged on top of a small hill. I advanced in his direction and when I came near him, I noticed that his lips were moving in prayer. Hardly had .he completed his prayers, when a cloud appeared in the sky

Seeing the cloud, the black slave praised Allah and moved away. Very soon, rains .lashed us so heavily that we thought we might perish

I ran after the slave and observed that he entered the house of Imam Sajjad (a.s.). I :arrived before the Imam (a.s.) and said

".O' My Master! In your house there is a black slave; oblige me by selling him to me"

He (a.s.) replied, "O' Sa'eed! Why should I not gift him to you, instead,"and ordered the head of his slaves to bring all the servants before

Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ١, pg. ۵۴; Ihyaa al-U'loom, vol. ۴, pg. ٣٨٠; Riyadh al- - ١ .Hikaayaat, pg. ١۴٠

.me. When they had assembled, I noticed that the black slave was not amongst them

".I said, "The one whom I desire, is not amongst them

".The Imam (a.s.) said, "There remains no other slave except one

He then ordered him to be brought forth. When the slave was brought before me, I saw that he was the very person whom I had sought and so I said, "He is the one I ".need

O' Slave! Henceforth, Sa'eed is your master so go with him," instructed the Imam" .(.(a.s

The slave turned to me and asked, "What prompted you to separate me from my (master?"(١

I replied, "When I witnessed your prayers for the rains being accepted, I wished that I ".could ownyou

When he heard this, the slave stretched out his hands in supplication and, turning his :face towards the skies, beseeched

O' My Lord! This was a secret between You and me. Now that You have divulged it, " ".grant me death and take me towards Yourself

The Imam (a.s.) and all those present, wept over the position of the slave, while I, shedding tears, came out of the house. No sooner had I reached my own house, than the Imam's (a.s.) messenger arrived and said, "Come along if you wish to takepart in ".the funeral procession of your companion

I returned to the Imam's (a.s.) house along with the messenger only to find that the (slave had passed away.(٢

Prophet Musa's Request (۵

:Prophet Musa (a.s.) once requested to God

O’ Lord! It is my wish to“

p: ۲۶

۱- ماَ حَمَلَکَ عَلَی أَنْ فَرَّقْتَ بَیْنِی وَ بَیْنَ مَوْلاَیَ

۲- Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ۲, pg. ۳۸; Ithbaat al-Wasiyyah (author: Masu’di).

see that creature of Yours who has purified himself for your worship and who is ".unpolluted in his obedience towards You

He was addressed, "O' Musa! Go near the shores of such-and-such sea in order that I ".may showyou what you desire to see

Prophet Musa proceeded till he reached near the sea. Looking around, he observed that on a branch of a tree that drooped over the water, sat a bird, engrossed in the :dhikr of Allah. When Musa questioned the bird about itself, the bird said

From the time Allah has created me, I have been on this branch, engaged in His" worship and dhikr. From every dhikr of mine, there branch out a thousand other dhikr, and the pleasure which I derive from the dhikr of Allah, provides me with ".nourishment

.(.Do you crave anything from this world?" asked Musa (a.s"

.Yes. I yearn to taste one drop of water from this sea," replied the bird"

Musa (a.s.) exclaimed, "But there does not exist a great distance between your beak "?and the water! Why don't you dip your beak into it and drink it

The bird answered, "Out of fear lest the enjoyment derived from the water should ".make me heedless of the pleasure of the dhikr of my Lord

(Hearing this, Prophet Musa (a.s.) clasped his head in intense astonishment.(١

Perseverance .۴

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَماَ اُمِرْتَ وَ مَنْ تاَبَ مَعَكَ

Then stand you fast (O' Our Apostle Muhammad) (on the right path) as you are) commanded, (by

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۱- Khazinah al-Jawaahir, pg. ۳۱۸

your Lord) as also he who has turned (to Allah) with you.)(۱)۴۰

:Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said

مَن ابْتُلِیَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ بِبَلاَءٍ فَصَبَرَ عَلَیْهِ کَانَ لَهُ مِثْلُ اَجْرِ اَلْفِ شَهِیْدٍ

Every Mu'min, who happens to be afflicted with a misfortune and (then) exhibits) patience in the face of it, shall be granted rewards equivalent to that of a thousand (martyrs.)(۲)

Short Explanation

.Endurance and perseverance can reduce the severity of misfortunes and calamities

A person who possesses faith does not exhibit impatience when faced with trials, lest .his faith should suffer

It has been said: A Mu'min is more resolute than a mountain. This is because he is steadfast against the enemies and displays fortitude in the face of misfortune, to the .extent that no grief ever finds a way into the heart of a perfect Mu'min

Life, with its many troubles, will not present a problem for those with a firm resolve. It is only those who lack sincerity in their perseverance who tend to break down at the slightest of calamities. After all, if the religion of God has reached us today, it is due to .(.the perseverance of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and the patience of Imam Ali (a.s

The Family of Yasir (۱

In the initial period of Islam, a small and oppressed family of four embraced the religion. Each of them displayed an incredible degree of perseverance in facing up to the ruthless tortures of the polytheists. These four persons were Yasir, his wife .Sumaiyyah and their two children A'mmar and A'bdullah

Yasir stood steadfast in his

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Hud (١١), vs. ١١٢ -١

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ٣, pg. ٤٠٤ -٢

religion, suffering the abuses of the enemies, till he eventually died. His wife Sumaiyyah, in spite of her advanced age, resolutely bore the tortures of the enemies till eventually Abu Jahl inflicted her final injury. Sumaiyyah therefore attained .martyrdom as a result of a blow to her abdomen

Abu Jahl, in addition to physically torturing Sumaiyyah, also tortured her :psychologically at a time when she was old and frail. He used to taunt her saying

You have brought faith upon Muhammad not because of God, but because you are" ".enamoured with Muhammad and captivated by his good looks

Yasir's son, A'bdullah, was also subjected to great tortures but he too remained steadfast. The other son, A'mmar, would be taken to the scorching desert, stripped under the hot sun and have an iron coat-of-mail placed over his half-burnt body. He would then be forced to lie on the heated sand, the particles of which were like tiny smouldering pieces of iron from the blacksmith's furnace. As a result, the chains of the coat-of-mail would penetrate into A'mmar's body and he would be told,"Reject Muhammad (s.a.w.) and worshipLat and U'zza,"but A'mmar never succumbed to their .torture

The burning metal left such traces imprinted upon his body that when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) saw him, A'mmar appeared to resemble someone who was afflicted with leprosy. The disease-like marks upon the face, arms and body of A'mmar gave .him the appearance of a leper

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) used to say to this family

!O' Family of Yasir"

(Be patient and remain steadfast, for undoubtedly Paradise is your abode."(1)

2) You are not Inferior to an Ant

Amir Taimur Gurgaan, was someone who was so firm and unfaltering in every predicament, that he did not cower from any misfortune. When the reason for this was sought from him, he said:

"Once, having fled from my enemies and seeking refuge in the ruins of a worn down and dilapidated building, I was reflecting over my future when my eyes suddenly fell upon a small and weak ant, carrying a grain bigger than itself, endeavouring to climb to the top of a wall.

"Looking carefully and counting accurately, I found that the grain had dropped from its clutches sixty seven times before the ant finally managed to make it to the top of the wall with it. The spectacle of this effort on the part of the ant infused within me strength of such great magnitude that I am never able to forget it.

" I said to myself: O' Taimur! You are by no means inferior to an ant. Arise and get back to work.I got up and gathered my resolve till I eventually came to acquire the courage that I now possess."(2)

3) Hadhrat Nuh (a.s.)

Hadhrat Nuh (a.s.) lived a very long and difficult life which resulted from his spending a lot of time among stout idol worshippers, attempting to rid them of their false beliefs. However, in spite of this, he persevered and exhibited steadfastness, withstanding their tortures and troubles.

At times, the people would beat him up to such an

1- Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۵; Tafsir al-Manaar, vol. ۲, pg. ۳۶۷.

2- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۷۴; Akhlaaq-e-Ijtimaae'e, pg. ۴۱.

extent that for three whole days he would be in a state of unconsciousness while blood continued to ooze out of his ears. They would pick him up and throw him in a house but upon regaining consciousness, he would pray:

"O' Lord! Guide my people for they comprehend not!"

For approximately nine hundred and fifty years, he invited people towards God, but the people only increased in their rebellion and obstinacy. They would bring their children towards Nuh (a.s.), point him out to them and say:

"O' Children! If you happen to remain alive after us, beware that you do not follow this insane person!"

Then, they would say to him, "O' Nuh! If you do not stop your speeches, you shall be stoned to death. These people who follow you, are base and ignoble ones, who have listened to your talks and accepted your invitation without the slightest of reflection and deliberation."

When Nuh (a.s.) spoke to them, they would insert their fingers into their ears and pull their clothes over their heads so that they would neither hear his words nor see his face. The situation reached such an unbearable point that Nuh (a.s.) saw no alternative but to seek God's help and so he supplicated:

"O' Allah! I am overpowered. Assist me and grant me relief from them."(۱)

۴) Sakkaki

Siraj al-Deen Sakkaki was an Islamic scholar and a native of Kharazm.

Sakkaki was a blacksmith by profession. Once, having constructed a tiny and delicate iron chest with great

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۱- Taareekh-e-Anbiya, pg. ۴۸-۵۲.

effort and trouble, he decided to present it to the king of the time. The king and his ministers appreciated the delicate piece of work but while Sakkaki stood by awaiting his reward, a scholar entered the courtroom, whereupon everybody honoured him and sat before him in veneration and respect. Sakkaki was very impressed and .askedwho he was. He was informed that he was one of the scholars of that period

Sakkaki lamented the nature of his own profession and decided to seek knowledge instead. He was thirty years of age when he approached a school and expressed his :desire to gain knowledge. The teacher of the school said to him

At your age, I doubt if you can make any progress. Go away and do not waste your“ ”.timeunnecessarily

But after a great deal of insistence, Sakkaki procured the permission to engage himself in seeking knowledge. His memory was very weak. Once, his teacher asked him to memorize the following religious ruling: The skin of a dog becomes pure by means of tanning; but the next day, when he had to recite it before his teacher, he :said

”.The dog said: The skin of the teacher becomes pure by means of tanning“

.Hearing this, the students as well as the teacher burst out laughing and ridiculed him

Ten years of effort did not yield any result for Sakkaki, who became sad and despondent. He turned towards the mountains but as he wandered, he reached a place where drops

of water were falling from a height onto a large slab of stone. The persistent falling of water had carved a hole in the stone.

Sakkaki studied the stone for some time and then said to himself:

"Surely your heart is not as hard as this rock. If you persevere, you shall finally succeed." Having resolved on this, he returned to his school and from the age of ۴۰, began his studies with even greater diligence, vigour and patience. Sakkaki finally reached a stage whereby, in the field of Arabic grammar and literature, the scholars of his period looked upon him with wonder and awe.

He wrote the book Miftaah al-U'loom, which comprises twelve sciences of Arabic literature and is regarded as one of the greatest and most distinguished works on the subject.(۱)

۵. Reconciliation

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ اِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مَنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ إقْتَتَلُوْا فَأَصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَهُما

(And if two parties of the believers fall into a quarrel, restore peace between them two)(۲)

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said:

لَأَنْ اَصْلَحَ بَيْنَ اِثْنَيْنِ اَحبُّ اِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ اَتَصَدَّق بِدِيْنارَيْن

(Reconciling between two (disputing) persons is dearer to me than giving two dinars in charity.)(۳)

Short Explanation

One of the mandatory acts required of us is the inspection and rectification of our souls. Until a person reforms himself, he would be unable to bring about reformation

within others. Attempting or achieving reconciliation between the brethren-in-faith, .relatives, or neighbours, is an attribute which is immensely loved by God

For the purpose of establishing unity and harmony instead of disunity and discord, it

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.Dastaan-ha-e-Maa, vol. ٣, pg. ٤٥ -١

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat, (٤٩), vs. ٩ -٢

.Al-Kafi, vol. ٢, pg. ١٦٧ -٣

is essential to make every possible effort to bring about reconciliation. In fact, in certain circumstances, it becomes permissible to resort to white lies. At times, it may .even become obligatory, so that dissension dies down and discord subsides

The Order to Reconcile (۱

Once, during the time of Imam Sadiq (a.s.), Abu Hanifah, the administrator of Hajjaaj, had a quarrel with his son-in-law over some inheritance. Mufadhdhal Ibn U'mar Kufi (one of the close companions of Imam Sadiq (a.s.)) happened to pass by at the time. :When he overheard the dispute, he stopped and said to both the men

".Come with me to my house"

They did as requested. Upon reaching the house, he entered inside only to come out shortly afterwards with a bag containing four hundred dirhams, which he gave to both :men and made peace between them. He then explained

This is not my money but Imam Sadiq's (a.s.). He hadinstructed me: Whenever you" happen to see two of our Shiites disputing over money, give them this and make (peace between them."(۱

Exercise Caution in Reconciliation (۲

:A'bd al-Malik says

There arose a dispute between Imam Baqir (a.s.) and some of the children of Imam Hasan (a.s.). I approached the Imam (a.s.) and sought to intervene in the matter in :order to reconcile them, but the Imam (a.s.) advised

Do not say a word in this dispute for our problem is like that of the old man from Bani" Israel, who had two daughters. One of them was married to a farmer, while the other .to a pottery-maker

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.Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۴۹ -۱

Once he decided to pay them a visit. He first visited the daughter who was the wife of the farmer and reaching her house, he inquired about her health. The daughter said: "Dear father, my husband has cultivated a large area of land and if it were to rain, we would be the most prosperous of the entire Bani Israel."

Then, proceeding towards the house of the other daughter, whose husband was a potter, he inquired about her health.

The daughter said, "Dear father, my husband has moulded pots in great quantity and if God were to withhold the rains till his pots dry up, we would be better off than the entire Bani Israel."

As he departed from the house of his second daughter, he prayed:

"O' God! Act as You deem fit for, in this situation, I cannot pray for either of them."

The Imam then said to me, "You too cannot intervene in this matter. Be wary, lest you show disrespect to either of us. Your responsibility towards us, because of our relationship with the Holy Prophet, is to treat all of us with deference and esteem."(۱)۴۹

۳) Reward of Reconciliation

Fudhail Ibn A'yyadh says:

A distressed man once took some rope, which his wife had woven, to the market in order to sell it so as to save himself and his family from hunger. Having sold it for one dirham, he intended to purchase some bread when he came across two persons quarrelling and trading blows with one another over

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۱- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۳۴; Raudhah al-Kafi, pg. ۸۵.

one dirham. The man stepped forward, gave them a dirham and established peace between them. Empty-handed once again, he went home and narrated the entire incident to his wife. She expressed happiness over his conduct. On searching the house, she found an old dress, which she handed to her husband, so that he could sell .it and procure some food

The man brought the dress to the market but there was nobody willing to buy it from .him. Looking around, he saw a person with a putrefied fish in his hand

He approached the man and said, "Let us exchange our goods. You give me your fish ".and I shall hand you my dress

.The fish-seller agreed and the man returned home with the fish

His wife busied herself with cleaning the fish when, suddenly, something valuable popped out of its stomach. She handed the object to her husband to sell in the market. The man sold it for a very good sum and returned home, but he had hardly entered the house when a destitute person came up to the door and called out, "Provide me ".from that which God has granted to you

As soon as the man heard the cry, he brought out all the money and invited the poor man to take as much as he wanted. The beggar picked up some money and started to :walk away. But he had just gone a few paces, when he returned and said

.I am not a poor person"

I have been sent by God and have to inform you that the amount of money which has (reached you, is your reward for reconciling those two quarrelling persons."(۱)

Mirza Jawad Agha Maliki (۴

Regarding the mystic, Mirza Jawad Agha Maliki (died ۱۳۴۳ A.H.), it has been recorded that during the initial stages of his journey in quest of spiritual purification and after having studied under his teacher, the great mystic Mulla Husainquli Hamadani (died :۱۳۱۱ A.H.) for two years, he complained to the teacher

"!In my quest for spiritual purification, I have not been able to achieve anything as yet"

.What is your name?" asked the teacher"

".He replied, "Don't you recognize me? I am Jawad Maliki Tabrizi

"?Husainquli Hamadani enquired, "Are you related to such and such Maliki family

.Mirza Jawad replied in the affirmative, and then went on to speak critically of them

Whenever the time comes for you to place their shoes before them to wear (which" you regard as base and lowly), I shall personally come to guide you," advised .Husainquli Hamadani

The next day when Mirza Jawad went for his classes, he seated himself behind all the other students and from that day on, slowly and steadily, he began to become acquainted and friendly with the students of the Maliki family living in Najaf. This continued until a stage was reached when he would even place their shoes before them to wear. When the relatives living in Tabriz came to know of this, the dissension and discord that existed among the members

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۱۸; Farajun Ba'd al-Shiddah -۱

.of the family, subsided and peace was established amongst them

:Later Mirza Jawad approached his teacher, who said to him

There are no new instructions for you (after that of reconciling the members of the" Malikifamily). Continue to act upon this order of the Sharia'h and derive benefits from ".it

Author's note: Incidentally, the book Miftaah al-Falaah of the late Sheikh Bahaai is an (excellent book to actupon."(۱)

Slowly, Mirza progressed in his quest. He came to the Hawza of Qum where he embarked upon training and guiding students in the field of spiritual purification. A great number of people, the common public as well as the educated elite, benefited .from him and his teachings

Advice of Mamun's Minister (۵

Once, Mamun the Abbasid Caliph, became furious with Ali Ibn Jahm Saami, the court :poet, and in a fit of anger ordered his servants

".Put him to death and confiscate all his possessions"

Mamun's minister, Ahmad Ibn Abi Duwaad, in a reconciliatory move, approached him ".and asked, "If you kill him, from whom shall we confiscate his wealth

.From his heirs," replied Mamun"

Ahmad said, "In such an event, the Caliph would not have confiscated his wealth but that of his heirs, for after his death he shall cease to be the owner of his possessions. And seizing the wealth of one for punishing another is an act of injustice, which does "!not befit the rank ofCaliphate

Mamun said, "Well, if this is the case, imprison him, confiscate his wealth and then put ".him to death

Ahmad departed, imprisoned Ali Ibn Jahm

Taareekh-e-Hukamaa Wa U'rafaa, pg. ۱۳۳ -۱

and held him alive till Mamun's anger had subsided. Mamun pardoned Ali Ibn Jahm and commended the minister for his conduct and elevated him in rank and status.(۱)

۶. Hopes

point

Allah, the Wise, has said

ذَرْهُمْ یاَكُلُوْا وَ یَتَمَتَّعُوْا وَ یُلْهِهُمُ الْاَمَلُ

(Leave them that they may eat and enjoy themselves and (that) hope may beguile them, for they will soon know.)(۲)

Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

الآمَالُ لاَ تَنْتَهِی

(Hopes never come to an end)(۳)

Short Explanation

People who are not content with what they possess of this world and crave for things which they do not possess, will keep chasing high hopes and lofty aspirations. A person, who imagines that he will always remain young, becomes heedless of death and goes after huge ambitions.

The majority of the inmates of hell would have gone there as a result of their procrastination. Instead of contending themselves with what they possessed, they kept deferring the rectification of their souls and the repayment of their debts for later, and postponing their acts of worship for their old age.

Indeed, a person must lower his hopes and aspirations, perform every act at its appropriate time and occasion, and refrain from trusting the 'tomorrow', something that is entirely unknown and uncertain.(۴)

۱) Prophet Isa and the Farmer

It is reported that once, Prophet Isa Ibn Maryam (a.s.) had been sitting and intently .observing a farmer who, with a spade in hand, was hard at work in his field

:At that moment Prophet Isa prayed to God

".O' Lord! Take away from him his hopes and aspirations"

Suddenly, the person flung

.Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ٩٨ -١

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hijr (١٥), vs. ٣ -٢

.Ghurar al-Hikam, pg. ٦٢٩ -٣

.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ١٦٧ -۴

.his spade aside and sat down in a corner

.O' Lord! Return his hopes and aspirations back to him" Isa (a.s.) prayed once again"

.The man moved from his place, picked up the spade and began working again

"?Isa (a.s.) approached him and asked, "Why did you behave in such a way

The farmer answered, "I said to myself: 'You are an old man whose life has almost come to an end; how much more do you wish to work and exert yourself?' And so I flung the spade aside and sat down in the corner. But after a while, I said to myself: 'Why don't you work? You are still alive and in need of livelihood' and so, picking up (the spade, I returned to my work."(١

Hajjaaj and the Milk Seller (٢

Once, Hajjaaj Ibn Yusuf Thaqafi, the brutal tyrant, (and the minister of the Abbasid caliph, A'bd al-Malik Ibn Marwaan) was sauntering in the market when he witnessed a :milk-seller talking to himself. Whilst standing in a corner, Hajjaaj overheard him say

If I sell this milk, I shall earn a good income. I shall save the profit from this and" future sales till I have sufficient money to buy a goat. I shall then purchase an ewe and utilize its milk to increase my capital and within a few years, I shall become a .wealthy person, possessing several goats, cows and (other) assets

I shall then seek the hand of Hajjaaj's daughter in marriage, after which, I shall come" to acquire great importance

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ١, pg. ٢٩٨; Majmua'-e-Warraam -١

and significance. And if, on any occasion, Hajjaaj's daughter were to exhibit ".disobedience, I should kick her so hard that her ribs would break

As he said this, he kicked out with his leg, which unfortunately struck his milk container, spilling its entire contents in the process. Hajjaaj came forward and ordered two of his soldiers to force the milk-seller onto the ground and strike him a .hundred lashes

"?The milk-seller wailed, "But for what crime are you punishing me

Hajjaaj replied, "Did you not say that if you married my daughter, you would kick her so hard that her ribs would break? Now, as a punishment for that kick, you must taste (a hundred lashes."(١

Desire for Martyrdom (٣

A'mr Ibn Jamuh, an inhabitant of Madinah and from the tribe of Khazraj, was a generous and magnanimous person. The first time the people of Khazraj arrived in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), he sought to know who the leader of their tribe was. They informed him that he was a person by the name of Jadd Ibn Qais, a :miser by nature. The Prophet (s.a.w.) said

".Your chief should be A'mr Ibn Jamuh, the white-complexioned, curly haired person"

A'mr was lame in one foot and as per Islamic laws, exempted from jihad. He had four sons and when the time for the battle of Uhud came, all of them prepared themselves .to fight

.I must come too and attain martyrdom," said Amr eagerly"

However, his sons stopped him and said, "Father, we are going

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.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ٣, pg. ١٥٠ -١

".for battle. You stay in the house for it is not obligatory for you to fight

The old man refused to budge and insisted on participating in the battle. The sons .gathered their relatives in an effort to get him to change his mind, but to no avail

Amr approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and complained to him, "I yearn to attain martyrdom. Why do my children prevent me from going for jihad and getting "?martyred in the way of Allah

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said to the sons

This man seeks martyrdom and although it is not obligatory for him to fight, it is not" ".forbidden for him to do so

Overjoyed, Amr armed himself and set off for battle. During the battle, his sons kept an eye on him as he valiantly thrust himself into the heart of the enemy ranks, fighting .heroically, till he was eventually martyred

Before leaving for the battlefield, he had prayed: O' God! Grant me martyrdom and do not return me to my house. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) stated that his prayer had been answered.Amr was finally laid to rest in the cemetery of the martyrs of the battle of Uhud.(۱)۵۸

Jo'dah State of Disgrace and Humiliation (۴

Imam Hasan (a.s.) was extremely good-looking, possessed great forbearance and generosity, and was very kind and affectionate towards the members of his family. After the martyrdom of Imam Ali (a.s.), Mua'wiyah, for a period of ten years, embarked upon a mission of hatred, deception and enmity with respect to Imam .(Hasan (a.s

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.Daastaan-ha-e-Ustaad, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۸ -۱

He subjected the Imam (a.s.) to harm and injury on several occasions, but did not achieve anything. He therefore resolved to use the Imam's wife Jo'dah, the daughter .of Asha'th Ibn Qais, to poison him

Mua'wiyah lured her by promising her that if she poisoned Hasan Ibn Ali, he would give her a hundred thousand dirhams and, in addition, he would marry her to his son Yazid. In the hope of acquiring wealth and with the aspiration of becoming the wife of Yazid, she agreed to comply with his request. Mua'wiyah handed her the poison that .he had acquired from the Roman Emperor

On a very hot day, Imam Hasan (a.s.) had observed a fast. At the time of Iftaar, the Imam (a.s.) was extremely thirsty. Jo'dah brought him a drink of milk in which she had .mixed the poison

As soon as Imam drank the milk, he experienced the effect of the poison. He realized what had happened and cried out aloud: Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raajiu'n. After praising God that he would now be moving from the ephemeral world towards the :eternal world, he turned towards Jo'dah and said to her

O' Enemy of God! You have killed me, may God kill you! By God, you shall not come to" acquire the slightest of that which you hope and aspire for. That person has deceived "!you. May Allah humiliate you and him by means of His chastisement

The forbearance of Imam Hasan (a.s.) can be gauged from

the fact that when Imam Husain (a.s.) sought to know the identity of his murderer, Imam Hassan (a.s.) refused to divulge Jo'dah's name.

According to one tradition, for two days (and according to another, for forty days), the Imam suffered from the ill effects of the poison, till eventually, on the ۲۸th of Safar ۵۰ A.H., he bid farewell to this material world at the age of ۴۸ years.

As for Jo'dah, she carried her hopes and desires to her grave for Mua'wiyah reasoned that if she could not be faithful to Hasan Ibn Ali (a.s.), how could she be expected to be faithful to Yazid; and so he refused to fulfil any of his promises. As such, she died in a state of disgrace and humiliation.(۱)

۵) Mughirah Becomes Governor of Kufah

Mughirah Ibn Sho'bah, who was originally an inhabitant of Taaif and had embraced Islam in the ۵th century A.H., was a deceitful, devilish and power-loving person.

When he heard that Mua'wiyah had arranged for Ziyaad Ibn Abihi to settle in Kufah so that he could later take the governorship of Kufah away from him (Mughirah), he quickly appointed a deputy in Kufah and set off towards Shaam to meet Mua'wiyah. He expressed his wish to be transferred from Kufah, explaining to Mua'wiyah:

"As I have grown old now, I have to request you to place a few small villages of Qirqisiya under my control, so that I can rest myself."

Mua'wiyah realised that one of his opponents, by the name of Qais, lived in Qirqisiya and if

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۱- Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۳۱.

Mughirah were to go there, he might form an alliance with him against Mua'wiyah.

“We are in need of you and you must remain in Kufah,” said Mua’wiyah.

Mughirah declined the offer, but Mua'wiyah’s insistence persuaded him to give in. It was midnight when Mughirah returned to Kufah. He immediately ordered his associates to dispatch Ziyaad Ibn Abihi towards Shaam.

After a period, Mua'wiyah appointed Sa’eed Ibn A’as as the governor of Kufah in place of Mughira, who incited Yazid (son of Mua’wiyah) by telling him:

“Why is Mua'wiyah not thinking about you? It is imperative that he nominates you as his successor and the crown prince!”

Yazid found the idea so appealing that he presented it to his father, Mua'wiyah. With Mughira’s support, Yazid was eventually proclaimed successor to Mua'wiyah.

In the meantime, Mua'wiyah appointed A'mr A’as as the governor of Misr, while placing Kufah under his son, A'bdullah Ibn A'mr A’as.

When Mughirah came to know of this, he warned Mua'wiyah, “By this act, have you not placed yourself between the mouths of two lions?”

Having grasped the message of this statement, Mua’wiyah deposed A'bdullah from Kufah and once again placed Mughirah at the helm of affairs in Kufah.

Thus, by means of two cunning plots (Yazid’s succession to the caliphate, and the scheme of ‘between the mouths of two lions’), Mughirah became the governor of Kufah. After ruling for seven years and a few months, he died of plague at the age of forty-nine.(۱)۶۰

۷. Trustworthiness

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

اِنَّ اللهَ یاَمُرُ کُمْ اَنْ

۱- Paighambar Wa Yaraan, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۷۲-۲۷۵.

تُؤَدُّوا الْاَمانَاتِ اَلَى اَهْلِهَا

(Surely Allah commands you to render back your trusts to their owners.(١)

:Imam Baqir (a.s.) said

فَلَوْ اَنَّ قَاتِلَ عَلِیّ بْنِ اَبِی طَالِب ائْتَمَنَی عَلیَ اَمانَهٍ لَاَدَّیْتُها اِلَیْهِ

(If the murderer of Imam Ali (a.s.) places a trust in my possession, I would surely return it back to him)(٢)۶٢

Short Explanation

If anything is placed in trust with someone, safeguarding of that thing is obligatory and unfaithfulness with respect to it is prohibited, irrespective of whether its owner is .a believer or a disbeliever

A trustworthy person, as a result of safeguarding people's belongings, becomes the .beneficiary of God's grace and favour

A person who is unfaithful towards people's trust can be compared to a thief and God .cloaks such a person with poverty and indigence

.One of the signs of perfect faith is not being unfaithful towards the trusts

A trust can be in the form of money, things or even secrets. Shaitan leads astray a trustworthy person by causing him to become unfaithful towards the trust placed with .him

Trustworthiness of Umm Salamah (١

When Imam Ali (a.s.) decided to move to Iraq and settle there, he handed his letters and testament to Umm Salamah, who in turn passed them over to Imam Hasan (a.s.) .on his return to Madinah

In a similar manner, when Imam Husain (a.s.) set out for Iraq, he too placed his letters and testament in the custody of Umm Salamah with instructions that she should hand

them over to his eldest son whenever he sought them from her. After the martyrdom of Imam

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.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Nisaa (۴), vs. ۵۸ -۱

Al-Kafi, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۳۳ -۲

Husain (a.s.), Imam Sajjad (a.s.) returned to Madinah and she handed documents over to him.(۱)۶۳

:U'mar, the son of Umm Salamah, narrates

My mother said: Once, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), accompanied by Ali (a.s.), came to“ my house and asked for a sheepskin. After I had handed it to him, he wrote something on the sheepskin and returned it to me with the instruction: “Whoever seeks this trust ”.from you after mentioning these signs, hand it over to him

As time passed, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) departed from this world. Time passed and .Imam Ali (a.s.) became Caliph and still nobody came to claim this trust

:U'mar continues

On the day when the people pledged allegiance to Ali (a.s.), I was seated among“ them. As he stepped down from the pulpit, the Imam’s eyes fell on me whereupon he .said: Seek permission from your mother for I wish to meet her

I hurried to my mother and as soon as I informed her of Imam’s (a.s.) request, she ”.announced that she had been waiting for that day

The Imam (a.s.) entered and asked Umm Salamah to hand him the trust which contained certain signs.My mother got up and took out a small chest from inside a larger one and handed it to him. Then, she turned to me and advised: “Do not forsake Ali (a.s.), for none other than him is the rightful Imam after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).” (۲)۶۴

The Unfaithful Grocer (۲

During the rule of A’zud al-Daulah Dailami, a stranger once came to Baghdad wishing to sell

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۱- Safinah al-Bihaar, under ‘سلم’

.Payghambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۷۵; Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ۶, pg. ۹۴۲ -۲

a necklace worth a thousand dinars, but could not find any purchaser for it. As he intended to travel to Makkah, he began to search for a trustworthy person who would .safeguard his necklace

The people pointed him to a grocer who was known for his piety. The stranger placed .the necklace in the grocer's trust and proceeded towards Makkah

When he returned from Makkah, he approached the grocer and presented him with some gifts that he had brought with him. To the stranger's great surprise, the grocer pretended as if he did not know him and denied having possession of anything belonging to him. A quarrel ensued, as a result of which, people gathered and threw .the person out of the 'pious' grocer's shop

The person approached the grocer for his necklace several times, only to receive .abuse and invectives

Someone advised him to complain to King A'zud al-Daulah Dailami.Heeding the :advice, the man wrote a letter to the king, who replied

For three days, wait by the door of the grocery. On the fourth day, I shall pass there" and when I greet you, reply to my greetings. The following day, seek your necklace ".from thegrocer and then inform me of the outcome

The person did as instructed. On the fourth day, the king, with great pomp and grandeur, passed by the grocery and as soon as his eyes fell upon the person from Baghdad, he greeted him. The person returned the greeting. The king, exhibiting great

:respect and esteem, began to complain

You have come from Baghdad but you did not deem it fit to honour me with a visit“ ”.and to grant me an opportunity to provide you with accommodation and comfort

.The stranger apologized for not having informed the king of his arrival

All the while, the grocer and the people around him, looked on in amazement, wondering who this person was who was revered so greatly by the king. The grocer .began to fear for his life

As soon as the king’s procession had passed, the grocer turned towards the stranger :and said

Brother, when exactly did you place that necklace with me? Did it have any marks?“ Let me have another look, perhaps I might just be able to locate it.” The person .described his necklace and the grocer, after a short search, found it

He handed it over to the person and said:“God is aware of the fact that it had simply ”.slipped out of my mind

Arriving before the king, the person related the entire episode to him. The king ordered the grocer to be arrested, placed the necklace around his neck and sent him to the gallows. He then ordered the following announcement to be made all over the :city

Such is the punishment for anyone who takes possession of a trust and then denies“ ”!it. O’ People! Do take heed from this incident

The king then returned the necklace to the stranger from Baghdad and sent him to his own city.(۱)۶۵

Remaining Faithful when Someone Trusts you (۳

A'bdullah Ibn Sinaan

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ١, pg. ٢٠٢; Mustatraf, vol. ١, pg. ١١٨ -١

:says

I approached Imam Sadiq (a.s.) in the mosque at a time when he had completed his“ :A’sr prayers and was sitting down facing the Qiblah. I asked him

Some of the governors and rulers consider us to be trustworthy and thus place their“ wealth with us, but at the same time, they do not pay their ‘khums’. Do we return their ”?money to them or do we keep it for our use

The Imam (a.s.) replied three times,“By the Lord of the Ka’bah! Even if Ibn Muljam, the murderer of my father Ali (a.s.), were to place something in trust with me, I would (return it to him whenever he wanted it back.”(١

The Shepherd and the Jews’ Sheep (۴

In the year ٧ A.H., the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) with an army of one thousand and six hundred soldiers, set out to conquer the fort of Khaibar, which was about ٩۶ miles from Madinah. The Muslim soldiers had stationed themselves in the desert around Khaibar for sometime but the conquest of the fort remained elusive. During this period, they found themselves in a very difficult situation as far as food was concerned. The lack of food and intense hunger forced them to eat animals like .horses and mules, whose meat is disapproved by Islam

In these circumstances, a black shepherd, who used to graze the sheep of the Jews, arrived in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). He embraced Islam and then said :to the Holy Prophet

These sheep belong to the Jews and I hereby hand“

.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ١, pg. ٣۵۴; Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ١۵, pg. ١۴٩ -١

".them over to you

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) replied unequivocally

These goats have been placed in your possession as a trust and in our religion it is" forbidden to be unfaithful to one's trust. It is incumbent upon you to lead the sheep to ".the door of the fort and hand them over to their owners

The shepherd, in compliance with his orders, handed the sheep over to their respective owners and then returned to join the Muslim army.(1)

Possessions Entrusted to the Holy Prophet (5

When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) migrated from Makkah to Madinah, he left behind Amirul Mu'mineen in Makkah so that he could return the possessions entrusted to the .Prophet, back to their respective owners

:Handhalah Ibn Abi Sufiyaan instructed U'mair Ibn Waail to go to Ali and tell him

I had placed one hundred mithqaal(2) of gold with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). Since he" has fled to Madinah and you are his representative here, please handmy property back to me." Handhalah added that if Ali asked for witnesses to support the claim, all .the Quraish would testify to the veracity of U'mair's claim

Initially, U'mair was hesitant but Handhalah enticed him by presenting him with some .gold and a necklace belonging to Hind, the wife of Abu Sufiyaan

U'mair approached Ali (a.s.) and made the claim, adding thatAbu Jahl, I'krimah, .U'qbah, Abu Sufiyaan and Handhalah would testify for him

The Imam (a.s.) retorted, "May their deception rebound on themselves", and then ,asked him to bring his witnesses near the Ka'bah. When all of them had arrived

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1- Seerah Ibn Hishaam, vol. ۳, pg. ۳۴۴; Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۸, pg. ۱۱۴.

.A weight, equivalent to ٥ grams -٢

he began questioning each one, individually and separately, about the items being held in trust.

"What time was it when you had placed your possession with Muhammad (s.a.w.)?" he questioned U'mair first.

"It was morning when I gave him the gold and he handed it over to his servant," replied U'mair.

H. Ali (a.s.) asked Abu Jahl the same question.

He replied, "I have no idea."

When Abu Sufiyaan was questioned, he responded, "It was at sunset and he had placed it in his sleeves."

When Handhalah was questioned, he gave the answer, "He took possession of the gold at the time of Dhuhr and placed it in front of him."

When U'qbah was questioned, he replied, "It was A'sr when the Prophet took the possession in his own hands and carried it to his house."

And finally, when the Imam (a.s.) questioned I'krimah, he answered, "It was bright and early in the morning when Muhammad (s.a.w.) took possession of it and sent it to the house of Fatimah (a.s.)."

The Imam (a.s.) then informed them of their conflicting statements and their deception thus became apparent.

Then, turning to U'mair, he asked him, "Why was it that while you lied, you appeared uneasy and your face had gone pale?"

U'mair replied, "By the Lord of the Ka'bah! I had not placed anything in trust with Muhammad (s.a.w.). It was a deception Handhalah had bribed me into. This necklace here, belonging to Hind, with her name inscribed on it, is one of the things presented to me as a bribe."(١)

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۱ - Rahnamaa-e-Sa'adat, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۳۵; Naasikh al-Tawaareekh - Amirul Mu'mineen, pg. ۶۷۶.

Examination .۸

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

الَّذِى خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَ الْحَياةَ لِيَبْلوَكُم اَيُّكم اَحْسَنُ عَمَلاً

Who created death and life that He may try you (to prove) which of you is best in) (deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving)(۱)

:Imam Sajjad (a.s.) said

اِنَّما خَلَقَ الدُّنْياَ وَ اَهْلَها لِيَبْلُوَهُم فِيهَا

(Allah created the world and its inhabitants in order to examine them in it.)(۲)

Short Explanation

Man faces different types of examination in the world. He is tested through fear, hunger, diseases, death of one's near and dear ones, financial constraints, false accusations, evil neighbours, and so on

Since this world is a place of deeds and examinations, blessed and happy are those .who do not fail at any stage of life

On one occasion, a person is tested by means of wealth and on another occasion by indigence. He achieves success by resorting to thanksgiving during affluence and patience during poverty. Everyone, without exception, is subjected to trials and examinations which vary only in their 'quality' and 'quantity'. Do you not see how some people, who are accustomed to boasting, lose their patience and fail miserably ?in the face of examinations

Haroon Makki (۱

:Sahl Khorasani approached Imam Sadiq (a.s.) and complained

Why is it that in spite of the truth being on your side, you do not stage an uprising? At"

the present time, there are one hundred thousand of your Shiites, who upon your orders, would immediately unsheathe their swords for battle."

The Imam (a.s.), with the intention of giving him a practical answer, ordered the furnace to

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۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mulk (۶۷), vs. ۲.

۲- Al-Kafi, vol. ۸, pg. ۷۵, (New Edition).

.be lighted. He then instructed Sahl to jump into the flames

Sahl said, "O' My Master! May God shower you with His grace and favours! Do not place me in the fire. I take back my words and request you to withdraw your ".instruction too

Meanwhile, one of the sincere companions of the Imam (a.s.), by the name of Haroon Makki, happened to arrive. Just as he entered, the Imam (a.s.) told him to take off his shoes and walk into the hot furnace. As soon as Haroon heard the Imam's (a.s.) order, .he entered the furnace and sat within the flames

The Imam (a.s.) then turned to Sahl and started to brief him about the circumstances .prevailing in Khorasan, as if he had been there to witness the events taking place

".After a while, he said to Sahl, "Get up and have a look inside the furnace

When Sahl peered into the furnace, he saw Haroon sitting cross-legged and .unharmed inside, surrounded by the fiery flames

How many individuals like this one exist in Khorasan?" the Imam (a.s.) questioned" .Sahl

.By Allah! Not a single person like Haroon Makki exists in Khorasan," replied Sahl "

The Imam (a.s.) then explained, "I shall not stage an uprising when I do not have even five sincere companions. (And do remember) we are very well aware as to when we should stage an uprising."(۱)۷۲

!Buhlool Succeeds (۲

Haroon Al-Rashid, the Abbasid Caliph, wished to appoint a judge in Baghdad. After conferring with his courtiers, it was unanimously agreed

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.Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۴, pg. ۶۵; Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۲, pg. ۷۱۴ -۱

.that none, except Buhlool, possessed the right qualities for the post

Buhlool was summoned and the post was offered to him. But Haroon declined to accept, saying that he was neither worthy of the post nor capable of undertaking the .task

Haroon said, “All the inhabitants of Baghdad are of the opinion that none except you, ”!is worthy of the post and you deny it

:Buhlool explained

I am more aware of myself than any of you. Whatever I have stated is either true or“ false. If the reason I have given is true, then it would be improper of me to assume the office of judge when I am not capable. On the other hand, if I have lied to you, ”.then a liar does not deserve to take this post

But Haroon insisted that Buhlool took up the responsibility. Buhlool requested that he be granted one night to reflect over the offer. The next morning, Buhlool feigned insanity and placing a staff between his legs ran through the streets and markets of :Baghdad, screaming

”.Make room for my horse and keep away lest it kicks you“

As soon as the people noticed his antics, they commented that Buhlool had gone :insane. When Haroon Al-Rashid was informed of this, he said

Buhlool has not become insane; rather he has saved his religion and has escaped our“ clutches. He has enacted this in order to prevent himself from interfering in the affairs (and the rights of the people.”(۱

Author’s note: Yes, each one is subjected to

Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۸۱; Raudhaat al-Jannaat, pg. ۳۶; Gharaaib al-Akhbaar -۱ .of Sayyid Ne’matullah Jazaairi

a specific examination. Not only was Buhlool offered authority, but the Caliph would send him food. Buhlool, however, would not eat it, saying,: Throw it to the dogs behind the bath. Even they, if they were to realize that it was the Caliph's food would refuse to eat it!

3) Abu Hurairah Failed!

Abu Hurairah embraced Islam in the year ۸ A.H. He was therefore in the company of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) for only two years. He died in the year ۵۹ A.H., at the age of ۷۸.

Abu Hurairah had come to be regarded as one of the companions of the holy Prophet. However, he failed to benefit from the Prophet's (s.a.w.) holy company and protect himself from blunders and errors. On the contrary, he misused his position and sold himself for the material gains of this world.

Abu Huairah used to forge traditions and ascribe them to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) in return for riches. On the first of the occasions when this occurred, the second Caliph prohibited him from narrating traditions; on the second occasion, the Caliph punished him by lashing him, and on the third occasion, he had him expelled from the city.

When A'laa, the governor of Bahrain passed away in the year ۲۱ A.H., U'mar appointed Abu Hurairah as governor in his place. But within a short period, a large amount of money (four hundred thousand dinars) had found its way into Abu Hurairah's own pockets. As a

.result, U'mar dismissed him from his post

Mua'wiyah used to compel some of the companions and the 'followers' to forge traditions against Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) and one of the principal personalities in this .act was Abu Hurairah

Once Asbagh Ibn Nubata said to Abu Hurairah, "Contrary to the teachings of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) you befriend Ali's (a.s.) enemies and harbour enmity towards his "!(peace be upon him) friends

Hearing this, Abu Hurairah sighed deeply and simply said, "Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi ".raajiu'n

Another of the evil deeds committed by Abu Hurairah was that, in order to acquire riches from Mua'wiyah, he accompanied the latter to the mosque of Kufah and :slapping his forehead several times in full view of the gathering, said

O' People of Iraq! Do you think I shall ascribe a lie to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and" thereby burn myself in the fire of Hell? By Allah! I have heard theHoly Prophet (s.a.w.) say: 'For every prophet there is aholy sanctuary and mine is in Madinah, between the mountains of E'er and Thaur. Whoever establishes an innovation in my sanctuary, may the curse of Allah, the angels and all the people be upon him'. I take Allah as my witness that Ali (a.s.) introduced an innovation within the sanctuary of the Holy .(Prophet (s.a.w.)." (God Forbid

Mua'wiyah was so pleased with this statement that he rewarded Abu Hurairah and made him the ruler of Madinah.(۱)۷۴

Ibrahim and the Sacrifice of Ismai'l (۴

God ordered Ibrahim (a.s.) to sacrifice his son Ismai'l (a.s.). He did

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.Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۵۴-۱۶۶ -۱

this to examine Ibrahim's (a.s.) patience and obedience to Allah. If Ibrahim (a.s.) .passed this test, he would demonstrate his worthiness of Allah's grace and favour

Having been bestowed with a child after years of loneliness without any children, he was being ordered by God to sacrifice with his own hands the apple of his eyes, who .had grown up to become a young boy of ۱۳

:(.Ibrahim (a.s.) said to Ismai'l (a.s

O' My beloved son! I have dreamt that I am sacrificing you; what do you think about" "?this

Dear father! Act as you have been ordered and, God willing, you shall find me of the" .steadfast ones," Ismai'l (a.s.) replied

:Then, he strengthened his father's resolve by advising

Father, death is very painful and I am so fearful of it that its very thought leaves me" disturbed and distressed, so bind my hands and legs firmly, lest I beat about with them while my throat is being slit and thereby reduce the rewards ordained for me. In addition, sharpen the knife so that I am put at peacequickly. Also, place me with my face towards the ground and not upon my cheeks for I fear that if your eyes fall upon my face, compassion might overtake you and prevent you from complying with the Divine commandment. Take off your garments so that my blood does not taint them and my mother does not see my blood. If you deem it fit, take my clothes to my ;mother

".they might serve to console her and lessen her grief at my death

Hearing this speech, Ibrahim (a.s.) responded, "O' Son! You are indeed an excellent ".aide (to me) in executing God's commandment

Ibrahim (a.s.) took his son to Mina (the place of sacrifice), sharpened the knife and then binding Ismai'l's (a.s.) hands and legs, laid him with his face towards the ground. Ibrahim then raised his head towards the heavens and placed the knife on his son's throat. But, as he did so, he realized that the knife did not cut. Looking at it, he noticed that the sharp knife had turned blunt. This occurrence was repeated several times, :when suddenly a heavenly voice was heard saying

O' Ibrahim! Indeed, you have acted as you had dreamt and have complied with the .commandment given to you

As a substitute for the sacrifice of Ismai'l (a.s.), Jibraeel brought a goat, which Ibrahim (a.s.) subsequently sacrificed. From here, it became a custom that those performing the hajj every year should offer a sacrifice at Mina.(۱)۷۵

Sa'd and the Holy Prophet (۵

One of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), by the name of Sa'd, was very poor and was regarded as one of the People of the Ledge.(۲) He used to offer all his prayers behind the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), who was greatly distressed by Sa'd's poverty. One day, the Holy Prophet promised him that if he got some money, he would give it to Sa'd. Time passed but no money came to the

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Taareekh-e-Anbiya, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۶۴-۱۶۹ -۱

These were the people, who did not possess a house of their own and so, lived in -۲ .the veranda or the rooms of the mosque

Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) who became even more distressed at Sa'd's situation. It was at this time that Jibraeel descended from the skies, bringing with him two dirhams.

He said to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), "Allah has said: We are aware of your distress in connection with Sa'd's poverty. If you want him to emerge from this state, give him these two dirhams and ask him to engage himself in trade."

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) took the two dirhams and set out of the house for the Dhuhr prayers when he found Sa'd waiting for him near one of the rooms of the mosque.

Turning to him, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked:

"Can you engage yourself in business?"

"By Allah! I have no capital with which I can do business," replied Sa'd.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) handed him the two dirhams and told him to start trading with this capital.

Sa'd took the money and after offering the Dhuhr and A'sr prayers set about to earn his livelihood.

God blessed him in such a way that whatever he purchased for a dirham, he would sell it for double the amount. Consequently, his financial state gradually improved. This continued till he eventually purchased a shop near the mosque and began conducting his business from there.

As his business picked up, he began to become lax with respect to his acts of worship, even to the extent that when Bilal recited the adhaan he would not get ready for the prayers. Previously,

!he was ready well before adhaan was recited

:When the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) noticed Sa’d’s lateness for prayers, he said to him

Sa'd, this world has made you so busy that it has even weaned you away from your“ ”.prayers

Sa’d replied, “What can I do? If I leave my wealth unattended, it will go to waste and I will end up in loss. From one person, I have to collect the money for the goods sold, ”.while from another I have to take possession of the goods purchased

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was disturbed at Sa'd’s involvement with his wealth and his negligence with respect to his acts of worship. At that moment, Jibraeel descended :and said

Allah has said: ‘We possess knowledge of your distress. Which of the two states do“ ”?you prefer for Sa'd

.The Holy Prophet indicated that the previous state was beneficial for Sa’d

Jibraeel agreed, “Yes, love for the world causes man to become heedless of the ”.hereafter. Take back the two dirhams, which you had given to him previously

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) approached Sa'd and .asked him if he could return the two dirhams that he had given to him

.If you desire, I shall even give you two hundred dirhams,” said Sa’d“

”.No, just give me the two dirhams, which you had taken from me“

Sa’d handed the money to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and within a short time, his financial situation turned a full circle and before long he

(found himself in his previous state.(1)

9. Enjoining The Good And Forbidding The Evil

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

كُنْتُم خَيْرَ اُمَّهٍ اُخْرِجَت للنَّاسِ تَاْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَ تَنْهَونَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ

(You are the best group that has been brought forth for mankind: you enjoin goodness and you forbid the evil.)(2)

Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

مَنْ تَرَکَ اِنْكَارَ الْمُنْكَرِ بِقَلْبِهِ وَ يَدِهِ وَ لِسَانِهِ فَهُوَ مَيِّتٌ بَيْنَ الْاَحْيَاءِ

One, who refrains from prohibiting the evil by means of his heart, hand and tongue, is (like) a dead amongst the living.(3)

Short Explanation

Anyone who seeks to enjoin the good and forbid the evil must himself be aware of what is lawful and unlawful, and should not act contrary to what he preaches.

His aim should be to guide the people. He should talk nicely and be aware of the difference in the level of understanding of the people. If he is opposed, he should exhibit patience and if supported and favoured, he should thank God.

1) Bishr Haafi

Once, Imam Kadhim (a.s.) was passing by the house of Bishr Haafi, when he heard the sound of dance and music coming from inside.

At that very moment a slave-girl came out of the house to throw some garbage.

"Is the owner of this house a free person or a slave?" the Imam (a.s.) asked her.

The slave-girl replied, "He is a free man."

Hearing this, the Imam (a.s.) remarked, “You speak the truth, for had he been a slave, ”.he would have feared his Master

When the slave-girl came back inside the house, Bishr, who had been consuming wine, asked her what took her so

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۱- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۲, pg. ۷۸; Hayaat al-Quloob, vol. ۱, pg. ۵۷۸.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Aale I’mraan (۳), vs. ۱۱۰.

۳- Jaame’ al-Sa’adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۳۵.

long. As soon as the slave-girl related what had happened, Bishr immediately got up and ran bare-footed after the Imam (a.s.). Once he had caught up with the Imam, he expressed shame and repentance over his acts, sought forgiveness and amended his (wrongful ways.(١)

Mulla Hasan Yazdi, the Forbidder of Evil (٢

During the reign of Fath Ali Shah Qajaar, there lived in Yazd a scholar, by the name of Mulla Hasan Yazdi(٢) who was held in high esteem by the people. The governor of the city of Yazd used to oppress the people and treat them with great cruelty. Mulla Hasan advised him to stop his evil deeds. When he refused to mend his ways, Mulla .complained to Fath Ali Shah, but this too proved unproductive

Since Mulla was particularly assiduous with respect to the issue of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, he assembled the people of Yazd who, upon his orders, .collectively threw the governor out of the city

When Fath Ali Shah was informed of this incident, he was immensely upset and .ordered Mulla Hasan Yazdi to be brought before him in Tehran

.As soon as Mulla came, Fath Ali Shah asked him about the incident in Yazd

Mulla replied, "Your governor in Yazd was a tyrant and I wanted to relieve the people ".of his evils by throwing him out of Yazd

.The answer so enraged the Shah that he ordered Mulla's legs to be tied

Ameen-uddaulah said to the Shah, "He is not at fault. It was without his permission that the

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.(Darsi Az Akhlaaq, pg. ١٢٨; Minhaaj al-Karaamah (of A'llamah Hilli -١

.Author of Muheej Al-Ahzaan -٢

".people threw out the governor

:In spite of his feet being fettered, Mulla Hasan spoke out

Why do we need to lie? I had the governor thrown out of Yazd because of his"
".oppression

Eventually, due to the intervention of Ameen-uddaulah, Mulla Hasan's legs were
.untied

That night, Shah witnessed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) in his dream and observed that
.two of his toes were tied

.Why are your toes tied?" he asked the Holy Prophet"

".The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) replied, "It is you who has tied them

.Shah pointed out that he had never shown such disrespect

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) explained, "But was it not you who had ordered Mulla Hasan
"?Yazdi's feet to be tied

Shah woke up from his sleep greatly alarmed. He ordered Mulla Hasan to be given resplendent clothes and to be returned to his city with great honour and respect. Mulla Hasan refused to accept the clothes and returned to Yazd. Later, he travelled to
(Kerbala and remained there for the rest of his life.(۱

God's Command to Destroy City (۳

God ordered two angels to destroy a city. On reaching there, the angels noticed one of the inhabitants beseeching and supplicating to God. One of the angels said to the
:other

"?Don't you see this person supplicating"

.Yes I do, but God's order has to be executed," replied the other one"

".Wait. Let me ask God as to what should be done"

Praying to God, the first angel inquired: "In this city there is a person, who entreats and beseeches you. Do we still impose thechastisement

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.Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۳, pg. ۱۴۶; Qisas al-U'lema, pg. ۱۰۱ -۱

”?upon the city

:The answer came from God

Execute the commandment which has been given to you, for that person has never“ been perturbed and distressed for My sake, nor did he show anger over the evil deeds (committed by the other people.”(۱

Yunus Ibn Abd al-Rahmaan (۴

When Imam Kadhim (a.s.) departed from the world, his representatives had huge sums of wealth in their possession. As a result of their greed some of them began to deny the Imam's death and thereby laid the foundation of a sect known as Waaqifiyyah. Ziyaad Qandi possessed seventy thousand gold coins while Ali Ibn Abi .Hamzah had thirty thousand

Meanwhile, Yunus Ibn A'bd al-Rahmaan invited the people towards the Imamate of Imam Ridha (peace be upon him) and regarded the Waaqifiyah sect as false and erroneous. When Ziyaad Qandi and Ali Ibn Abi Hamzah realised what Yunus was :doing, they sent him a message asking

Why do you invite the people towards Imam Ridha (a.s.)? If your objective is to“ ”.acquire riches, we will make you rich

They pledged to give him ten thousand gold coins if he kept quiet and refrained from .(.inviting the people towards the Imam (a.s

Yunus Ibn A'bd al-Rahmaan(۲) replied to them by quoting a narration from Imam :Baqir (a.s.) and Imam Sadiq (a.s.), which says

When innovations manifest themselves amongst the people, it is imperative for the‘ elders and leaders to manifest what they know (so that people refrain from evil) and if they fail to do so, God shall take away from them, the light

1- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ٢, pg. ٢٣١.

2- Imam Ridha (peace be upon him) had said: Yunus Ibn A'bd al-Rahmaan, in his time, is as Salman Farsi was, in his own.

of faith.' Under no circumstances shall I abandon jihad in the path of religion and the affairs of God."

After receiving this forthright and explicit reply from Yunus, Ziyaad Qandi and Ali Ibn Abi Hamzah became his enemies.(١)

۵) The Caliph on the Rooftop!

One night, the second Caliph was surveying the streets to ascertain the general state of affairs in the city. In the course of his inspection, he happened to pass by a house from which he heard suspicious noises. He climbed over the wall of the house and looked inside. A man and a woman were sitting together, with a jar of wine placed before them.

Addressing them harshly he said, "You commit sins in solitude in the belief that God shall not make manifest your secret?"

The person turned to the Caliph and said, "Do not be so hasty, for if I have committed one sin, you have committed three. Firstly, God has said in the Qur'an: and do not spy(٢). You have been doing just that. Secondly, He has said in the Qur'an: and go into the houses by their doors(٣). You have entered from over the wall. Thirdly, He has said: So when you enter houses, greet your people with a salutation(۴). You have not done so."

The Caliph asked, "If I were to pardon you, do you resolve to amend your ways?"

"By God! I shall never repeat this act again," the man replied.

The Caliph said, "Now you can be at ease, for I have

١- Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ٢, pg. ٢۵٣.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat (۴٩), vs. ١٢ (وَ لَا تَجَسَّسُوا)

٣- Ibid, ch. Al-Baqarah (٢), vs. ١٨٩ (وَ آْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِن اَبوابِهَا)

۴- Ibid, ch. Al-Nur (۲۴), vs. ۶۱ (إِذاَ دَخَلتُم بُيُوتاً فَسَلِّمُوا)

(pardoned you.”(1)

Fairness .10

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِله شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسطِ

(Be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice.)(2)

:Imam Ali (a.s.) has said

مَنْ يُنْصِفُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ لَمْ يَزِدهُ اللهُ إلاَّ عِزًّا

(One, who exhibits fairness on his part, Allah shall increase him in glory.)(3)

Short Explanation

A person’s faith does not become perfect until he observes fairness with respect to himself and others. In exchange, God shall increase his honour and glory.

Man, by nature, prefers his own self and loves everything that is associated with him. He also possesses a dislike for everything bad and evil. Thus, if he helps someone in need, he would be commended by one and all. Similarly, (justice demands that) if he does not desire anything bad and evil for himself, he should not desire it for the others too.

This also holds true when mediating between two warring parties; never should he side unfairly with one, against the other, even if the outcome results in his own detriment.

An Advice from the Holy Prophet (1

An Arab approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) when he was about to embark upon a military expedition.

Seizing the reins of the Prophet’scamel, he said, “O’ Prophet of Allah! Inform me of a ”.deed that would earn me Paradise

Conduct yourself with people in the same manner as you would want them to behave“ towards you and refrain from doing to them what you would not want them to do to you,” advised the Prophet (s.a.w.) and then added, “Let go of the reins (for I have to go for

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.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۹; Al-Ghadeer, vol. ۶, pg. ۱۲۱ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Maidah (۵), vs. ۸ -۲

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۶۸ -۳

(jihad)."(١)

The Equity of Imam Ali (٢

Shu'bi narrates:

Like the other youths, I entered the vast open ground of Kufah, where I witnessed Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) standing beside two containers which were filled with gold and silver coins. He had a small whip in his hand. A huge crowd had gathered around him and he kept them back by means of his whip, to prevent them from hampering the distribution of the money.

The Imam (a.s.) began distributing the money amongst the people until nothing remained for himself and he returned home empty-handed.

I returned home and said to my father, "I witnessed a very strange act today but I fail to comprehend if this person's action was good or bad because he never retained anything for himself!"

My father inquired, "Who was the person?"

"Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.)," I replied and then went on to narrate what had transpired earlier. Upon hearing Ali's (a.s.) fairness in distributing the money, my father began to weep and said to me, "My son, you have witnessed the most excellent person from amongst the people."(٢)

A'di Ibn Haatim (٣

A'di, the son of the well-known Haatim Taai, was one of the sincere and loyal companions of Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.). From the year ١٠ A.H. when he accepted Islam, A'di had always remained in the service of the Imam (a.s.), and had fought alongside him in the battles of Jamal, Siffeen and Nahrawaan. In the battle of Jamal he sustained an injury to one of his eyes as a result of which he lost his vision.

Once he

.Al-Kafi, vol. ۲, Chapter of Fairness, tr. ۱۰ -۱

.Al-Ghaaraat, vol. ۱, pg. ۵۵; Dastaanhai Az Zindagi Ali, pg. ۷ -۲

came to Mua'wiyah for some purpose. Mua'wiyah asked him why he had not brought .his sons with him

.They were killed while fighting alongside Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.)," he replied"

Ali has not been just to you, for he sent your sons to be killed while he has kept his" .own sons alive!" said Mua'wiyah

A'di retorted, "(On the contrary) I have not done justice to Ali for he has been killed, whereas I am still alive. O' Mua'wiyah! Our rage towards you still smoulders in our hearts. Do know that (the pain of) having our throats slit or the agony of death is (easier for us to bear than hearing bad comments about Ali (a.s.)."(١

The Fairness of Abu Dharr (۴

On the way towards the battle of Tabuk(۲), Abu Dharr fell behind the army because he was mounted on a slow animal. When the others realized this, they notified the Holy :Prophet (s.a.w.), who said

".If he possesses goodness in him, God shall make him reach you"

Meanwhile, Abu Dharr, disappointed with his animal, dismounted and proceeded on foot. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) found a convenient place and had decided to pitch the tents, when one of the Muslims shouted that there was someone in the distance .approaching them

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) prayed

!O' Lord! May it be Abu Dharr

:The others informed him that it was indeed Abu Dharr. The Prophet supplicated

May Allah forgive Abu Dharr! He travels alone, shall die alone and shall be resurrected alone. He then asked the people to provide Abu Dharr

١- Ibid.

٢- Located three hundred miles north of Medinah.

.with some water, as he appeared to be thirsty

But when Abu Dharr arrived in his presence, the Prophet (s.a.w.) observed that he had a container of water in his possession, and so asked him, "Abu Dharr! You had water "?with you and yet you remained thirsty

Yes! O' Prophet of Allah! May my parents be sacrificed for you! On the way, I was" overcome by thirst. I reached a place where there was some water. Tasting it, I found it to be cold and delicious and so said to myself: (It is not fair) if I drink this water .before the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)," replied Abu Dharr

Hearing this, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "O' Abu Dharr! May Allah forgive your sins! You shall lead your life in solitude, die as a stranger, away from home, and enter (Paradise alone."(١

Altruism .١١

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ يُوثِرُونَ عَلىَ اَنْفُسِهِم وَ لَوْ كَانَ بِهِم خَصاَصَهٌ

(And prefer (the Mohajirs) over themselves though poverty may afflict them.)(٢)

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

اَيُّما اِمرِئٍ اِشتَهی شَهوَهً فَرَد شَهوَتَهُ وَ آثَرَ عَلَی نَفسِهِ غُفِرَ لَهُ

One, who covets something, (but) suppressing his desire gives others preference) (over himself, shall have his sins forgiven.)(٣

Short Explanation

The highest degree of generosity and munificence is altruism. An altruistic person, despite having his own acute needs and necessities, makes a sacrifice by giving .others preference over himself

Even the act of giving alms occupies a lower rank than altruism. Attaining the pleasure of Allah plays a

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۱- Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۹; Al-Isaabah, vol. ۴, pg. ۶۵

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hashr (۵۹), vs. ۹.

۳- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۱۸.

pivotal role in it. If a person, in an effort to save the life of a drowning person, gets drowned himself, the commendation from the Lord for this self-sacrifice, is a .thousand times more than that for the alms which he pays out

The Altruistic Slave (۱

A'bdullah Ibn Ja'far, the husband of Hadhrat Zainab (a.s.) was a person whose generosity was unparalleled. Once, as he happened to pass by a palm-plantation, he noticed a slave working there. At that very moment, the slave's food was brought and handed over to him. As he was about to start his meal, a hungry dog came before him, .wagging its tail

The slave placed a portion of his food before the dog and the animal immediately ate it up. The slave put some more food in front of the dog and before long it was eaten .too. This continued till he had given his entire food to the dog

A'bdullah, who had been witnessing the incident, asked the slave, "What is your daily "?ration of food

.The amount which you have just witnessed," the slave answered"

If that is the case, why then did you give the dog preference over yourself?" enquired" .A'bdullah

This dog had come from afar and was hungry and I did not deem it appropriate to" ".drive him away in that state of hunger

"?With what will you satiate yourself today"

.I shall overcome my hunger by patience and steadfastness," the slave explained"

A'bdullah, observing the slave's selflessness and altruism, thought to himself that the slave was

more generous than himself. By way of commendation and compensation for his altruism, A'bdullah purchased the slave and the plantation from the owner, freed the slave and finally gifted the entire plantation to him.(۱)

The Incident of the Mosque of Merv (۲

:Abu Muhammad Azdi narrates

When the mosque of Merv caught fire, the Muslims assumed that it was the work of the Christians and retaliated by setting their houses ablaze.

When the king came to know of this act, he ordered those involved in the incident to be arrested and punished. He ordered that the culprits should face one of three types of punishment - death, severing of a hand or whipping. Each punishment was to be written on a small piece of paper which was then placed in a box. Every guilty person was required to draw a piece from the box and would be subjected to the punishment written on it.

When one of these people picked and read his paper, he broke down in tears because his sentence was the death penalty.

A young boy, who appeared to be happy as he was to be punished with lashes, asked the distressed person:

"Why are you agitated and weeping? These punishments should not be a problem in the path of serving the religion."

The first person responded, "We have served our religion and therefore do not fear death, but the truth is that I have an old mother, and since I am her only son, she is entirely dependant upon me. When she hears about my death, she

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۱- Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۱۴; Al-Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۶, pg. ۸۰.

".will not survive

Having heard this, the youth reflected for a while and then said, "Neither is my mother alive nor do I have an attachment with anyone. Let us exchange our punishment so that I get killed instead of you and you face the lashes, after which you can return ".home to care for your mother

The two exchanged their punishment; the youth was killed, while the other person, after being lashed, returned home to his mother.(۱)

(The Battle of Yarmuk (Tabuk (۳

In the battle of Yarmuk, a group of Muslim soldiers would go out for battle everyday. After a few hours of confrontation, the unhurt and those who had minor injuries .would return, while the wounded or dead would be left on the battlefield

:Hudhaifah U'dwi, recounts

One day, my cousin, together with some other soldiers, set out for the battlefield. Unfortunately, after the conclusion of the day's battle, he failed to return. Picking up a container of water, I set out for the battlefield, hoping to provide him with a drink in .case he happened to be alive

After searching for sometime, I found my cousin who was barely alive. I stooped down beside him and asked him if he needed some water. He nodded. At that very moment, another soldier, who lay near him, heard me and then sighed loudly to .indicate that he was very thirsty

My cousin signalled to me to provide water to the soldier first. As I went to attend to .the injured soldier, I realized that he was Hishaam Ibn A'as

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۳۵; Mustatraf, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۵۷ -۱

I asked him whether he needed water.He signalled in the affirmative. Instantaneously, another injured soldier demanded water and Hishaam too refused to drink the water before the other soldier had drunk it. I moved towards the third soldier, but just as I reached him, he breathed his last. Returning to Hishaam, I observed that in this ensuing period, he too had died. I hastened towards my cousin, only to find him dead too!(١)١٠١

Imam Ali in Place of the Holy Prophet (۴

When the leaders of Quraish realised that the inhabitants of Madinah had pledged their loyalty to the Prophet, their hatred towards him intensified. Consequently, their leaders decided that on the eve of the first of Rabi' al-Awwal, one brave person from every tribe would gather together, besiege the Prophet's house and kill him as he lay .asleep in his bed

:(.God divulged their sinister plan to the Prophet, who said to Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s

As the polytheists intend to murder me tonight, God has ordered me to migrate. Will" "?you sleep in my place so that they do not find out that I have gone

.O' Prophet of Allah! Will you remain alive and well if I do this?" Ali (a.s.) asked"

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) confirmed that he would. Hearing this, Amirul Mu'mineen's (a.s.) face lit up with delight and he fell down in prostration of thanksgiving (to the Almighty Lord). He then said, "May my life be sacrificed for you! Go wherever God has ordered you to go; if you

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.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١, pg. ١٧٣; Mustatraf, vol. ١, pg. ١۵۶ -١

need me to do any work for you, just command me, and I shall unconditionally ".perform it, and from God I seek grace and success

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) took Ali (a.s.) in his arms, wept profusely and entrusted him to the protection of Allah. Then, Jibraeel took the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) by the hand .and led him out of the house and towards the cave of Thaur

That night, Amirul Mu'mineen slept in the Holy Prophet's (s.a.w.) bed and covered .himself with his cloak

The infidels had initially intended to attack the house in the darkness of the night, but Abu Lahab, who was also with them, advised against it saying that it was night and the women and children were asleep. He told them to wait till morning. When morning dawned, they rushed into the house only to find Ali (a.s.) in the Prophet's bed. They .asked him where Muhammad was

Did you leave him with me (that you now ask me about him)? You wanted to get rid of" .him (and so) he has gone away himself," he retorted

They left Ali (a.s.) and set off in pursuit of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w).(۱)۱۰۲

However, it was as a result of this act of self-sacrifice on the part of Ali (a.s.), that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) remained alive and unharmed. God revealed the following verse (.on this occasion. It pertains to Ali (a.s

And among men is he, who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is Affectionate to the

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۱- The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) remained in the Cave of Thaur for three days and on the fourth day proceeded towards Medinah, entering it on the ۱۲th of Rabi' al-Awwal in the ۱۳th year after the proclamation of Prophethood, .and from this migration commenced the Islamic calendar

(servants.(۱

The Self–Sacrifice of Haatim Taai (۵

Once, there was a severe famine in the place where Haatim Taai was staying. The provisions had dwindled until there was nothing left and the people were suffering .intense hunger and hardship

:Haatim's wife narrates

One night, there was not a morsel to be found in our house. Haatim, my two children, .A'di and Safaanah and myself, found that we could not sleep due to our hunger

With great difficulty, Haatim put A'di to sleep while I did likewise with Safaanah. Haatim then began to narrate a story with the intention of putting me to sleep, but the intensity of hunger kept me awake. All the same, I pretended to be so fast asleep that .even when he called out to me several times, I did not reply back

Haatim had been gazing into the desert from a hole in the tent, when he noticed a silhouette, advancing towards us. As it came nearer, Haatim realised that it was a lady :and called out

"?Who is it"

The lady bemoaned, "Haatim, my children are howling like wolves owing to their ".hunger

Haatim told the woman not to worry, as he would remove their hunger. Hearing this, I .got up from my place and asked him how he would do it

".He said, "I shall feed every one

He then proceeded towards the only horse which we possessed and which we utilized :to transport our belongings. He sacrificed it and gave a portion of it to the lady saying

Cook it and feed it to your"

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۱ - ۲۰۷ .Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah(۲), vs.وَ مِنَ النَاسِ مَن يَّشْرِى نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغاَءَ مَرْضاَتِ اللهِ وَ اللهُ رَؤُفٌ بِالْعِباَد

".children." Turning to me, he said, "Awaken the children so they can eat too

After a short while, he added, "It is a great shame to eat while others sleep beside you ".with an empty stomach

He proceeded to wake them up himself. Everyone ate the meat, except Haatim, who (sat and derived pleasure out of watching them eat.(١

Harassment .١٢

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

اَنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤذُونَ اللهَ وَ رَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللهُ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَ الْآخِرَه

Verily those who annoy Allah and His Messenger - Allah has cursed them in this World) (and in the Hereafter.)(٢

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

لَا يَحِلُّ لِلْمُسلِمِ اَن يُشِيْرَ اِلَى اَخِيهِ بِنَظْرَهٍ تُؤذِيهِ

It is not permissible for a Muslim to look at a brother Muslim in a manner that hurts) (and inconveniences him.)(٣

Short Explanation

All creatures belong to the household of (the Creation of) God and pre-eminent amongst them are the believers. Any person who is of benefit to the creation, becomes the beloved of God, while one who harasses and inconveniences others, .especially the believers, in any way, is as if he has declared war upon God

On the Day of Judgment, God shall call out: Where are those who harassed and tormented My friends in the world. A group of people whose bodies would be bare of .flesh, would step forward whereupon God shall order them to be hurled into Hell

Thus, it is essential to refrain from hurting and harassing others - parents,

neighbours, friends, and so on. If one has committed this act, forgiveness ought

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.Raahnama-e-Sa'adat, vol. ٢, pg. ٣٥٠; Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ١. pg. ٢٠٨ -١

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Ahzaab (٣٣), vs. ٥٧ -٢

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ٢, pg. ٢١٥ -٣

.to be sought from those concerned

Harassment of Imam Sajjad (١

During the time of Imam Sajjad, there lived a person in Madinah, who used to make .people laugh to earn his livelihood

Some people suggested that they should invite Imam Sajjad (a.s.) and allow this person to make him laugh a little in an attempt to sidetrack the Imam from his deep lamentation. They gathered together and were on their way to his house when they saw him coming towards them, accompanied by two of his slaves. When the Imam (a.s.) came near, the comediantook the cloak off Imam Sajjad's (a.s.) shoulders and .put it over his own. The people around burst out laughing when they saw this antic

"?The Imam (a.s.) inquired, "Who is this person

The people around him answered, "He is a person who makes people laugh and ".receives money from them for his antics

Inform him that those who expend their lives in a futile way performing absurd acts" .(.shall be the losers on the Day of Judgment," advised the Imam (a.s

After hearing this, the comedian stopped his annoying behaviour and mended his (ways.(١

Qaroon and Prophet Musa (٢

Prophet Musa (a.s.), in the course of propagating his religion, had to face severe adversity and hardship from the likes of Firo'un, Bala'm, Bao'ora and even his cousin Qaroon. Qaroon was immensely rich and possessed so much wealth that several strong youths were required to carry just the keys of his treasury. He was one of the .high ranking and influential nobles, who used to oppress his inferiors

,(.Musa (a.s

1- Darsi Az Akhlaaq, pg. 120; Al-Amaali (Sheikh Mufid), pg. 128.

in compliance with God’s orders, sought zakaat from him, but Qaroon used to say:

“I too possess knowledge of the Torah and am not inferior to Musa in any way; why should Ipay zakaat to him?”

Eventually, his arrogance forced him to resort to dirty tactics to try to demean Prophet Musa. He approached a woman who was of bad character but was also extremely beautiful and attractive.

He said to her, “I shall pay you a hundred thousand dirhams provided that tomorrow, when Musa (a.s.) is delivering a sermon to Bani Israel, you shout out in front of the people that Musa has committed adultery with you.”

The woman accepted the offer. The next day Bani Israel had gathered and Musa (a.s.), with the Torah in hand, was engaged in preaching to them. Qaroon, in all his finery, was also present in the crowd along with his attendants. Suddenly, the woman stood up, but as she looked at the saintly face of Musa (a.s.), she experienced a change of heart and cried out aloud:

“O’ Musa! Do know that Qaroon has promised me a hundred thousand dirhams if I accuse you, in front of Bani Israel, of having committing adultery with me; but (I declare that) you have never committed such an act and God has protected your holy personality from such uncleanness.”

When he heard this, Musa (a.s.) was devastated and heartbroken, and he cursed Qaroon by saying, “O’ Earth! Seize Qaroon and take him within you.”

Upon Divine orders, the ground

.underneath split apart and Qaroon and all his wealth fell in

According to another report, Musa had been preaching the people about his Sharia'h :when, in the course of his lecture, he said

A person who does not have a spouse and indulges in adultery shall be punished with" one hundred lashes and a person who possesses a spouse and (yet) commits ".adultery, shall be stoned to death

At that moment, Qaroon stood up and remarked, "(Would this be true) even if you "?were to commit such an offense

.Yes," replied Musa"

The Bani Israel are under the impression that you have committed adultery withsuch" ".and such woman

Bring the lady here," demanded Musa. "If she testifies to this claim, you are at liberty" ".to act according to the law

The woman was brought before Musa (a.s.) who, placing her under oath to speak the :truth, asked her

"?Have I committed adultery with you"

The woman suddenly began to experience a change in her thinking and gave an .answer which was opposite to what she had intended

No! They lie", she said. "Qaroon paid me such and such amount in order that I level" ".this accusation at you

Qaroon stood humiliated while Musa (a.s.) began weeping, fell down in prostration :and supplicated

O' God! Your enemy has hurt me and sought to disgrace me by means of calumny. If" ".I am Your Prophet, grant me ascendancy over him

Then he cursed Qaroon whereupon Divine punishment overtook him and the earth consumed him.[1]

3) It is Forbidden to Hurt a Mu'min

Husain Ibn Abi al-A'laa narrates:

I started out for Makkah in

1- Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. 13, pg. 253; Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. 5, pg. 122.

the company of twenty other persons. At every resting place, I would slaughter a goat, in order to provide the people with food. When I arrived in the presence of :Imam Sadiq (a.s.), he said to me

O’ Husain! Woe be unto you that you hurt and cause inconvenience to the“ ”.Mu'mineen

.I seek refuge in God from such an act,” I said“

He explained, “I have been informed that at every resting-place you used to slaughter ”.a goat for your companions

.”Yes, but By God, it was only for His happiness that I acted in this manner“

The Imam (a.s.) continued, “Don’t you realize that amongst the group there were some, who desired to possess wealth so they too could perform good deeds like you, ”.but not having the means, they have become upset

.I repent over my actions and resolve never to act in that way again,” I said“

The Imam (a.s.) advised, “A Mu'min, in the eyes of God, is more honourable than the angels, the mountains, the seven skies, the seven earths and everything that exists in (them.”(۱

Harassing Amirul Mu'mineen is akin to Harassing the Holy Prophet (۴

A'mr Ibn Shaas Aslami, one of the companions present during the treaty of :Hudaibiyah, narrates

Once, Ali (a.s.) and I had embarked upon a journey towards Yemen. During the journey, I happened to get upset with him and my heart was filled with malice .towards him

As I returned from the trip, I proceeded to the mosque and complained to the people about his behaviour. Unfortunately, it so happened that my words eventually reached the ears

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۵۳; La-aali al-Akhbaar, pg. ۱۳۵ -۱

.(.of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w

One morning, on entering the mosque, I noticed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) present there together with a few of his companions. As soon as his eyes fell upon me, he .gazed at me in anger and continued to do so till I had seated myself

.O' A'mr! By God, you have surely harassed me!" he said crossly"

."I exclaimed, "I seek refuge in God from ever harassing or annoying you

He said, "Yes, you have troubled me for whoever has troubled Ali (a.s.) has troubled (me too."(۱

Maltreatment by Mutawakkil (۵

One of the worst Abbasid caliphs was Mutawakkil, who left no stone unturned in his attempt to harass and torment Imam Hadi (a.s.), the descendants of the Holy Prophet .(.(s.a.w.), the Shiites and the pilgrims of Imam Husain (a.s

The governor of Madinah, A'bdullah Ibn Muhammad, acting on Mutawakkil's instructions, troubled Imam Hadi (a.s.) to such an extent that the Imam (a.s.) was .compelled to write a letter of complaint to Mutawakkil

Later on, Mutawakkil forced the Imam (a.s.) to move from Madinah to Saamarra. Here, he initiated a fresh wave of persecution and harassment, some instances of :which follow

One night, Mutawakkil called Sa'eed, his doorkeeper, and instructed him to climb into Imam's house and snoop around with a view to finding wealth or weapons. If they .were found, he should confiscate them

On another occasion, relying on a false accusation, he ordered a group of Turks to rush into the Imam's house, take possession of everything they could find

.Daastaan-hai Az Zindagi-e-Ali, pg. ١١٢; Mustadrak al-Sahihain, vol. ٣, pg. ١٢٢ -١

and bring him to the court. When the Imam (a.s.) was brought to the court, Mutawakkil was busy consuming wine and (out of mockery) offered it to the holy Imam (a.s.) and said: "Recite poetry for me!"

On yet another occasion, he had the Imam (a.s.) brought before him and ordered four Khazar Jilfi slaves(1) to attack him with swords, but the Imam (a.s.), utilizing the power of Imamate, miraculously repulsed this attack.

In the year ٢٣٧ A.H., Mutawakkil ordered the grave of Imam Husain (a.s.) and the houses in its vicinity to be destroyed and wanted the area to be used for farming and cultivation.

He decreed that a hand or a leg of anyone who came for the pilgrimage of Imam Husain (a.s.) should be amputated.

U'mar Ibn Faraj, who was made the governor of Makkah and Madinah by Mutawakkil, was ordered to prevent the people from helping or showing kindness to the descendants of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). The people, out of fear, refrained from assisting these descendants whose condition became so miserable and adverse that they did not even have proper garments to wear. This harassment and torture reached such a stage that Muntasir, Mutawakkil's son, out of love for Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) was eventually promptedto murder his own father.(٢)

١٣. Faith

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللهِ وَ رَسُولِهِ وِ الْكِتَاب

(O' You who believe! Believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Book, which He has revealed to His Messenger)(٣)

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.):

۱- These were stupid, brutish and wee-eyed people.

۲- Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ۲, pgs. ۳۷۸ – ۳۸۴.

۳- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Nisaa (۴), vs. ۱۳۶.

:said

اَلإيمَانُ عَقْدٌ بِالْقَلْبِ وَ نُطْقٌ بِاللِّسَانِ وَ عَمَلٌ بِالأرْكَانِ

Faith is (a combination of) conviction in the heart, speaking out by the tongue and)
(deeds by the limbs.)(١)

Short Explanation

The believers are ranked according to their level of faith. Faith has four pillars – tawakkul(٢), tafweedh(٣), ridha(۴) and tasleem(۵) – and one who possesses these pillars, acquires tranquillity and repose, and his faith attains stability and permanence. .The faith of those who are weak in belief is neither stable nor permanent

Did not Imam Sadiq (a.s.) say: (Allah grants the world to His friends and foes alike, but ?(faith, He bestows only to the chosen ones from amongst His creations

Hence, those possessing true and perfect faith have always been in the minority; .'forbearance being their 'minister' and wisdom, the 'commander of their army

Harithah's Martyrdom (١

One day, after offering the morning prayers in congregation, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) looked around the mosque and his eyes fell upon a youth, Harithah Ibn Maalik Ansaari, who sat with his head lowered in a state of drowsiness. His face was pale, his body thin and weak and his eyes appeared to have sunk into their sockets. The Holy :Prophet (s.a.w.) approached Harithah and inquired

"?What state are you in"

.I find myself as a true believer," replied the youth"

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked, "Everything possesses a truth; what is the truth "?behind what you claim

O' Prophet of Allah! I have become disenchanted with the world," he answered. "I" stay awake (in worship) in the night, and endure thirst

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۱- Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ۶۹, pg. ۶۹.

۲- (Translator's comments: Relying on God.)

۳- (Translator's comments: Entrusting one's affairs to God.)

۴- (Translator's comments: Satisfaction and pleasure over Divine decree.)

۵- (Translator's comments: Submission to God.)

by observing fasts) in the day. It is as if I am witnessing the A'rsh (Throne) of God and) the scenario of Reckoning, observing the inmates of Paradise meeting each other and ".hearing the shrieks of the inmates of hell

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) remarked, "This is a person, whose heart Allah has illuminated". Then, addressing Harithah, he continued, "You have acquired perception ."and insight, so remain steadfast

Harithah beseeched: "O' Prophet of Allah! Request Allah to grant me martyrdom while "!fighting alongside you

The Prophet prayed to Allah to grant martyrdom to Harithah. A few days later, he dispatched an army for battle and Harithah was included in it. During the battle, Harithah killed nine infidels before he himself was killed, being the tenth soldier from (the Muslim force to taste the nectar of martyrdom.(١

?Who is a Youth (٢

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) once asked the students and companions who had gathered around :him

"?Who is a 'youth"

".A person answered, "Someone who is young in age

The Imam (a.s.) said, "Despite the old age of the People of the Cave, on account of the faith which they possessed, God has referred to them as 'youths'. In verse ١٠ of the .(chapter al-Kahf, He says: When the youths sought refuge in the cave(٢

(He then continued,(٣) "Whoever believes in God and observes piety is a youth."(۴

Levels of Faith (٣

:Imam Sadiq, (a.s.) addressing a saddler, who used to serve him, said

Some Muslims possess one portion of faith, while there are others, who possess two" or three or even seven portions of

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.Al-Kafi, vol. ۲, ch.: The Chapter of Reality of Faith, tr. ۲ and ۳ -۱

۲- اِذ آوَی الفَتیْهُ اِلیَ الْکَهْفِ

۳- مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللهِ وَ اتَّقَی فَهُوَ الْفَتی

.Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ۵۸; Tafsir Nur al-Thaqalain, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۴۴ -۴

it. It is inappropriate to burden a person, possessing one portion of faith, with acts suitable for a person possessing two portions of faith. Similarly, it is inappropriate to burden a person who has two portions of faith with acts suitable for a person with ”.three portions of faith

:The Imam (a.s.) continued, “Let me present an example

Once, there was a man whose neighbour was a Christian. The man invited him to .Islam and the Christian agreed and converted to a Muslim

The next day at dawn, the Muslim knocked on the door of the convert’s house. When the convert answered the door, the man told him to perform wudhu, get dressed and accompany him to the mosque for prayers. The neighbour duly obliged and both men proceeded to the mosque. They offered not only morning prayers but also many .other prayers until it was sunrise

:The new Muslim wished to return home, when the man asked him

Where are you going? The days are short and very soon it will be time for the Dhuhr‘ ’.prayers. Let us wait until we have offered our Dhuhr prayers

So they waited till it was Dhuhr, when they offered their prayer. The convert prepared to leave but the man persuaded him to stay until A’sr time. They offered A’sr prayer after which the convert decided to go. The man told him that it was almost sunset and that they should not go before offering Maghrib prayer. He then persuaded his neighbour

.to stay for the E'sha prayer also

.Finally, they went back home

The next dawn, the man again knocked on the door of the convert and asked him to .go to the mosque with him

The newly converted Muslim retorted, 'For this religion of yours, seek someone who has more time on his hands than me. I am a poor person and have a family to feed '!and look after

The Imam (a.s.) concluded, "The ignorant Muslim reverted him to his original faith of (Christianity."(۱)

The Faith of Sa'eed Ibn Jubair (۴

Sa'eed Ibn Jubair was one of the steadfast and loyal companions of Imam Sajjad (a.s.). Hajjaaj was a bloodthirsty tyrant who had ruled over Kufah, Iraq and Iran for almost twenty years after being appointed by the Bani Umayyah and Bani Marwaan. He had killed nearly one hundred and twenty thousand people during his reign, and amongst the friends and descendants of Ali (a.s.) murdered by him, were individuals .like Kumail Ibn Ziyaad, Qanbar, the slave of Ali, (a.s.) and Sa'eed Ibn Jubair

Hajjaaj ordered Sa'eed to be arrested when he became aware of Sa'eed's belief and .(.inclination towards Imam Ali (a.s

Initially, Sa'eed fled to Isfahan, but when Hajjaaj came to know of this, he wrote to the governor of Isfahan, seeking his arrest. The governor possessed a high regard for .Sa'eed and therefore advised him to leave Isfahan for a safer resort

Acting upon this advice, Sa'eed set out towards Qum and then proceeded to Azerbaijan and then to Iraq where he sought to enter

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۷۹; Al-Kafi, 'The chapter of Levels of Faith', tr. ۲ -۱

the army of A'bd al-Rahmaan Ibn Muhammad, who had initiated a rebellion against .Hajjaaj

.A'bd al-Rahmaan was defeated and Sa'eed fled to Makkah where he lived in hiding

During that period, Makkah was under the rule of Khaalid Ibn A'bdullah Qasri, a ruthless individual, who had been placed there by the Caliph, Waleed Ibn A'bd al-Malik. Waleed wrote to him and gave him the order to arrest the well-known Iraqi .personalities who were hiding in Makkah, and to send them to Hajjaj

Thus, he arrested Sa'eed and had him dispatched to Kufah. At that time, Hajjaaj was .in Waasit, a city near Baghdad, where Sa'eed was eventually brought

Hajjaaj questioned him about himself, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), Ali (a.s.), Abu Bakr, :U'mar, Uthmaan and many others and then asked him

"?How should I put you to death"

Whatever manner you may adopt to kill me, you are bound to be chastised" .accordingly, on the Day of Judgment," replied Sa'eed

".I would like to forgive you"

If the forgiveness is from God, then I seek it, but if it is from you, then I do not desire" .it," responded Sa'eed

Hajjaaj ordered the executioner to sever Sa'eed's head before him. Despite his hands :being tied behind his back, Sa'eed recited the following verse of the holy Qur'an

Surely I have turned myself, wholly to Him, Who originated the heavens and the)earth, being upright, and I am not of the associators.(١

Hearing this, Hajjaaj ordered his face to be turned away from the Qiblah, whereupon he recited the following

١ - ٧٩ .Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Ana’am (٦), vs. إِنِّى وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّذِى فَطَرَ السَّمـاواتِ وَ الْأَرْضَ حَنِيفاً وَ ما أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

:verse

(Whithersoever ye turn, there is the presence of Allah(1)

When Hajjaaj heard this, he ordered his men to place Sa'eed's face down, upon the ground. When this was done, Sa'eed recited the following verse:

From the (earth) did We create you, and into it shall We return you, and from it shall We bring you out once again(2)

Hajjaaj shouted, "Don't waste any more time! Kill him!"

Sa'eed testified to the Unity of God and the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and prayed: O' God! Do not grant Hajjaaj respite after me in order that he does not kill anyone else. As he uttered these words, the executioner severed his head.

After the martyrdom of this epitome of perfect faith, Hajjaaj suffered a derangement of his senses and did not live for more than fifteen nights. Before his death, he would occasionally lose consciousness, but regaining it, he would repeatedly mutter:

"Why did I ever get involved with Sa'eed Ibn Jubair?" 127(3)

5) Salman Farsi's Rank

Faith has ten ranks and Salman Farsi was on its tenth rank. He possessed knowledge of the unseen, the ability to interpret dreams and misfortunes, was well versed in genealogy and had even been favoured with gifts of Paradise, in this world. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "Whenever Jibraeel would descend, he would, on behalf of God, say: Convey my salutation to Salman!"

Here is an example of the high degree of Salman's faith. Once, Abu Dharr paid Salman a visit. Salman had placed a utensil

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1- Ibid, ch. Al-Baqarah (2), vs. 115. فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ

۲- Ibid, ch. Taha (۲۰), vs. ۵۵. مِنْها خَلَقْناكُمْ وَ فِيها نُعِيدُكُمْ وَ مِنْها نُخْرِجُكَمْ تارَةً أَخْرى

۳- Daastaan-ha-e-Maa, vol. ۲, pgs. ۳۹-۴۵.

over the fire to heat its contents. The two men sat together for some time, talking to each other, when suddenly the vessel toppled over, but to Abu Dharr's amazement, its contents did not spill. Salman, picking the utensil up, placed it back upon the fire. A little later, the vessel fell over again, but once again its contents did not spill. Again .Salman picked it up and placed the vessel upright

Amazed, Abu Dharr hurried out of Salman's house and was lost in contemplation over what he had witnessed. He happened to come across Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) on the .way and narrated the incident to him

:Having heard Abu Dharr's narration, the Imam (a.s.) said

If Salman were to inform you of all that he possesses knowledge of, you would surely" say: 'May God have mercy upon the murderer of Salman.' O' Abu Dharr! Salman is the 'door' of God upon the earth. One, who recognises his status, is a Mu'min while one, (who rejects him, is an infidel. Salman is (one) of us, Ahlul Bayt."(١

Brotherhood .١۴

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤمِنُونَ اِخْوَةٌ

(The believers are but brethren)(٢)

:Imam Baqir (a.s.) said

عَلَیکَ بِإخْوَانِ الصِّدْقِ فَإِنَّهُم عُدَّةٌ عِندَ الرَّخاَء وَ جُنَّةٌ عِندَ الْبَلاَء

It is incumbent) upon you to take true friends for yourself, for they are an asset, in) (times of ease and a shield, during adversities(٣

Short Explanation

At any age, brotherhood and friendship are necessary for someone, who is worthy of

them. Allah has not bestowed upon

.Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۱۴ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat (۴۹), vs. ۱۰ -۲

.Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ۷۸, pg. ۲۵۱ -۳

His servants a bounty more important than success in keeping and associating with religious friends.

But do you not observe that the primary Grace which God granted to the Prophets at the time of their Prophethood was a friend, brother and wali? It is apparent from this that after the bounty of cognizance of God and His Prophets, there is no bounty more pure and pleasant than brotherhood in the path of God and a righteous friend.

One ought to refrain from entering into friendship and brotherhood with those, who seek these alliances out of avarice or worldly motives. A few brothers (in religion) who possess great cognizance, are better than numerous ones who lack this attribute.(۱)

A Mu’min is the Brother of Another Mu’min (۱)

Imam Baqir (a.s.) related:

Once, a group of Muslims had set off on a journey, but in the course of their travel, they lost their way. Their supplies were soon exhausted and they were overcome by intense thirst.

With no water in sight and imagining their end to be near) they put on their shrouds) and sat down, resting themselves against the trees.

Suddenly, an old man in white apparels approached them and said:

“Arise, for you have nothing to fear. Here is some water for you.”

They scrambled for the water and drank to their fill after which, turning to the old man, they said, “May God have mercy upon you! Who are you?”

“I belong to the Jinn community, who had pledged allegiance to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). I had heard him say: ‘A

p: ۹۱

۱- Tadhkirah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ۵۲.

Mu'min is the brother of another Mu'min. He is his eyes and his guide (too).' I could not allow you to die of thirst, while I was here."(1)

2) Bond of Brotherhood

Muhammad Ibn A'jlaan narrates:

I was in the company of Imam Sadiq (a.s.) when a man, from a distant city, arrived and greeted the gathering.

"How were your brothers when you took leave of them?" the Imam (a.s.) asked him.

The man spoke well of them and praised them a great deal. The Imam (a.s.) then questioned, "Do the rich visit the indigent ones when they fall sick?"

He said that they seldom did.

The Imam (a.s.) carried on, "Do the rich seek to know the condition of the impoverished ones?"

"Rarely" answered the man.

"Do the affluent ones help out the poor and the needy?"

The man responded, "You speak of attributes, which are rare amongst our people."

The Imam (a.s.) remarked, "How then do these people consider themselves to be (our) Shiites (when there exists no bond of brotherhood between the affluent and the impoverished ones)."(2)

3) At the Door of a Brother

Imam Baqir (a.s.) said:

An angel was once passing by a house, when he witnessed a man standing near its door. The angel questioned him, "Why do you stand here?"

"This is the house of my brother and I wish to greet him," answered the man.

The angel asked, “Is he of your kith and kin or is it that you are in need of his help that ”?you have come to pay him a visit

The reality is not as you make it“

.Al-Kafi, vol. ٢, ‘The Chapter of Brotherhood of the Mu'mineen’, tr. ١٠ -١

Al-Kafi, vol. ٢, ‘The Chapter of The Right of a Mu'min upon his brother’, tr. ١٠ -٢

out to be. We are just brethren in faith and I only wish to meet him and greet him for the sake of God."

"I am God's messenger towards you," the angel said. "He has sent you His greetings and has said: O' My Servant! You have paid Me a visit and desired My pleasure and so, as a reward for upholding the rights and sanctity of religious brotherhood, I have made Paradise compulsory for you and have distanced you from My fire and wrath."(1)

4) The Benevolent Governor

An inhabitant of the city of Rey, narrates:

One of the scribes of Yahya Ibn Khaalid was appointed as governor of Rey. I had some taxes to pay and feared that the new governor would extract it from me, for in such a case, I would face very difficult times. Some of my friends informed me that he was a follower of the holy Imams (a.s.), but I was fearful that if it was not so, he would not hesitate to put me behind bars.

With the intention of performing Hajj, I presented myself in the presence of Imam Musa Kadhim (a.s.) and informed him of my predicament. The Imam (a.s.) wrote a letter to the governor, the contents of which were as follows:

In the name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Compassionate. Do know that beneath the A'rsh (Throne) of God, there exists a shade of Mercy into which none shall enter except he who exhibits goodness and kindness towards his

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۱- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۸۱; Jaame' al-Akhbaar, pg. ۱۱۸.

brother-in-faith, liberates him from his sorrow and endeavours to make him happy. .Behold! The bearer of this letter is one of your brethren. Wassalaam

After returning from Hajj, one night I proceeded to the governor's house and asked the sentry to tell the governor that a person had brought a message from Imam .(.Kadhim (a.s

As soon as he was informed, the governor rushed out towards the door in sheer delight. He was barefooted and took me into his arms, repeatedly kissing my .forehead and inquiring after the Imam's well being

Having gone through the Imam's (a.s.) letter, he gave me half of all the money and clothes he possessed, and as for the things which could not be divided, he gave me :the monetary equivalent of half its value, asking me after each distribution

"?Have I made you happy"

".I would reply, "By God! You have pleased me greatly

He took out his register and erasing all the debts written across my name, handed me .a letter which contained an order, exempting me from all taxes

I took his leave and said to myself, "This person has been immensely kind to me and there is no way I can repay his munificence. Let me go for Hajj again and pray for him ".there and also inform the Imam (a.s.) of his generosity and kindness

That year I started out for Makkah and presenting myself before the Imam (a.s.), informed him of what had transpired. As I narrated the events, I

:observed that his face continually brightened up with delight and so I inquired

"?Have his deeds pleased you"

He said, "By Allah! His deeds have truly pleased me and he has (also) pleased God, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.)."(1)

Imam Ali, the Brother of the Holy Prophet (5

One of the extremely significant steps undertaken by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w), five or eight months after his migration to Madinah, was to establish the bond of brotherhood between the Muhaajir (The Emigrants) and the Ansaar (The Helpers).

:A'bdullah Ibn A'bbas says

When the verse

اِنَّماَ الْمُؤمِنُونَ اِخْوَةٌ

The believers are but brethren)(2) was revealed, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) proclaimed) brotherhood to be a general law amongst the Muslims and, taking into consideration their ranks and positions, established the bond between every two persons by making one the brother of the other; Abu Bakr with U'mar, U'thman with A'bd al-Rahmaan and so on.

Amirul Mu'mineen (a.s.) had stretched himself on the ground, when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) approached him and said:

"Arise, O' Abu Turaab! By God! I have not made you the brother of anyone for I have kept you for myself."(3)

Independence .15

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَينَيکَ اِلَيماَ مَتَّعْناَ بِهِ اَزواَجاً مِنهُم

Do not strain your eyes after what We have provided with some of them pairs among)
(them to enjoy)(۴

:Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said

شَرَفُ الْمُؤْمِنِ قِيَامُ اللَّيْلِ وَ عِزُّهُ اسْتِغْنَاؤُهُ عَنِ النَّاس

The honour of a Mu'min lies in nocturnal worship and his esteem lies in his being)
(independent of the people).(۵

Short Explanation

Contrary to the reprehensible attribute of greed is the attribute of independence

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Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۷; Bihaar al-Anwaar vol. ۱۱, 'The Biography Of Imam -۱
.'(Kadhim (peace be upon him
.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat (۴۹), vs. ۱۰ -۲
.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۸۲; Kashf al-Ghummah; Tafseer al-Burhaan -۳
.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hijr (۱۵), vs. ۸۸ -۴
.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۰۸ -۵

and self-reliance. In common usage, if it is said that a person has no need for anything, the immediate notion that comes to mind is that he is affluent. However, the actual meaning is to be self-sufficient, self-contained and not avaricious with respect to that which the others possess.

Persons who are independent with respect to God's creation, are highly respected and they possess 'trust in God' which is, by far, the greatest asset.

The fact that begging and seeking from others is censured, is because it erodes away the honour and status of a person, makes him a captive of others and lessens his inclination toward God.

A Lesson from the Holy Prophet (1)

One of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) once found himself in severe poverty. His wife advised him to go to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and request his help.

The man approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), but as soon as the Prophet's (s.a.w.) eyes fell upon the man, he said:

"If a person seeks something from me, I shall certainly grant it to him, but if he were to exhibit himself as being self-sufficient and free from want, Allah shall make him affluent."(1)

Hearing this, the man said to himself, "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has intended me by this speech of his."

Without uttering a word, he returnedhome and narrated the incident to his wife.

His wife said, "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) is also human; explain your dilemma to him and see what he has to say."

The man returned to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.).

١– مَنْ سَأَلَنَا اَعْطَيْنَاهُ وَ مَنْ اِسْتَغنَى اَغْنَاهُ الله

for the second time but heard the same sentence from him and again came back home without saying a word. When this was repeated for the third time, the man borrowed a pickaxe from one of his friends and set off towards the mountains. Throughout the day he worked hard to gather firewood, which he sold for some flour .and that night, he and his wife had bread for dinner

The next day, he worked harder and collected more firewood and this continued for .several days till he was able to purchase a pickaxe for himself

After some period, as a result of his hard work, he managed to purchase two camels .and a slave, and slowly became one of the affluent ones

One day, arriving before the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), he narrated to him the events of his :life and the effect of his words, whereupon the Prophet (s.a.w.) responded

I had said (before): One who seeks to be independent (of others), Allah shall make" (him independent."(۱

Alexander And Deozhan (۲

When Alexander was selected the supreme commander of Greece, people from all walks of life approached him to congratulate him upon his selection. However, Deozhan, the well-known philosopher, did not go to meet him and so Alexander himself went to meet Deozhan. Deozhan was a person, who followed the policy of .contentment, self-sufficiency and not depending on people

As he was lying under the sun, he sensed that a large group of people was approaching him. He raised himself slightly, when his eyes fell

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.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۳, pg. ۱۲۹; Wafi, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۳۹ -۱

upon Alexander, who was advancing with great pomp and grandeur; but Deozhan behaved just as he would behave if an ordinary person visited him.

Alexander greeted him and said, “If you need anything from me, just speak out!”

“I have only one request,” said Deozhan. “I had been enjoying the warm sunshine and presently you are obstructing it. Could you move over to one side?”

Those accompanying Alexander considered this speech to be very foolish and imprudent and spoke amongst themselves, saying:

“What a foolish man he is to have wasted such an opportunity!”

But Alexander, who felt dwarfed before the towering contentment and self-sufficiency of Deozhan, fell into deep reflection at these words.

On the way back he turned to his companions who had ridiculed Deozhan and remarked: “Indeed, had I not been Alexander, I would have desired to be Deozhan.”(۱)

۳) Not under Obligation of Avicenna

It has been narrated that once, Avicenna, in great ministerial splendour and fanfare, was passing by a sweeper, who was reciting this poem loudly whilst performing his menial work:

O’ Soul! I have held you in high esteem, so that you are a means of serenity for the heart.

Hearing this, Avicenna smiled and said to him (derisively), “Indeed, you have truly held your soul in high esteem by engaging yourself in such (lowly) work.”

The sweeper stopped his work, turned to him and said, “I make my living by means of this lowly work so that I am not compelled to be under the obligation of the lofty Avicenna.”(۲)

۴) The Recitation of Surah Al-Waaqia’h

A'bdullah Ibn Masu'd had been one of the

p: ۹۸

.Riwaayat-ha Wa Hikaayat-ha, pg. ۳۹; Daastaan-ha-e-Paraakandeh; vol. ۲, pg. ۶۶ -۱

.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۶۲; Naameh-e-Daanishwaraan -۲

close companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and had developed into being a distinguished and zealous personality of Islam. During the caliphate of U'thman, he suffered a bout of illness, which eventually resulted in his death.

U'thman once came to pay him a visit and finding him distressed, asked, "What distresses you so greatly?"

"My sins," he answered.

"Tell me your wish so that I can fulfill it for you."

"I desire God's mercy", replied Ibn Mas'ud.

The caliph asked,"If you permit, I could call for the doctor."

"It is the Doctor who has made me sick."

"If you want, I could present you with gifts from the Public Treasury."

Ibn Masu'd retorted, "At the time when I was in need, you did not give me a thing and now that I am not in need, you wish to shower me with presents!"

U'thman insisted, "Let these gifts be for your daughters then."

"They are not in need of your presents," Ibn Masu'd replied tersely. "I have instructed them to recite the chapter Al-Waaqia'h every night, for surely, I have heard the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) say: One, who recites the chapter Al-Waaqia'h every night, shall never be afflicted by poverty."(1)

16. Stinginess

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ وَ يَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَ يَكْتُمُونَ ما آتاهُمُ اللّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَ أَعْتَدْنا لِلكافِرِينَ عَذاباً مُهِيناً

(Those who are niggardly and bid people to be niggardly and hide what Allah has

given them out of His grace; and We have prepared for the unbelievers a disgraceful (chastisement.)(٢)

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

جَاهِلٌ سَخِيٌّ اَحَبُّ

p: ٩٩

١- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ٧, pg. ١١٢; Majma' al-Bayaan, vol. ٩, pg. ٢١١.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Nisaa (۴), vs. ٣٧.

اِلَی اللهِ مِنْ عابِدٍ بَخِیلٍ

An ignorant but generous person is more beloved to Allah than one, who is devout) (but parsimonious.)[1]

Short Explanation

Stinginess, or refraining from giving things to others and collecting wealth and riches for oneself, is one of the signs of love for the world. It impedes one from adorning oneself with several praiseworthy virtues like charity, munificence, self-sacrifice and helping others. It is for this reason that the holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said: No miser .shall enter Paradise

Stinginess is such a repugnant vice that if a person gets afflicted with it, he keeps his family in poverty, detests guests coming to his house, abstains from visiting others in order that none visit him, withholds himself from associating with generous persons and feels uneasy about other people's generosity. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) always (sought refuge in God from this deadly vice.[2]

The Miser's Sin (1

Once, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was engaged in circling the Ka'bah seven times when he witnessed a man holding the curtain of the Ka'bah and imploring: O' God! By the !sanctity of this House, forgive me

.Approaching him, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)asked him about his sin

".The man replied, "My sin is too enormous for me to describe to you

.(.Woe be unto you! Is your sin greater or the earth?" asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.w"

".My sin"

"?Is your sin greater or the mountains"

".My sin"

”?Is your sin greater or the Throne of God“

”.My sin“

”?The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) then asked, “Is your sin greater or God

,To this the man replied

p: ١٠٠

.Jaame’ al-Sa’adaat, vol. ٢, pg. ١١٠ -١

.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ٩۶ -٢

".God is the Greatest, Loftiest and the Most Glorious"

."The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) exclaimed, "Woe be unto you! Inform me of you sin

The man explained, "O' Prophet of God! I am a wealthy person, but whenever a poor man approaches me for help, I feel as if a bolt of fire has approached me."

:On hearing this, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) warned

"Stay away from me and do not burn me in your fire! By He, Who has sent me with Guidance and Honour, if you were to offer prayers between al-Rukn and al-Maqaam (around the Ka'bah) for two thousand years and weep in such a measure that your tears flow as rivers and quench the trees, and after all this, if you were to die while still possessing the vice of stinginess, God would hurl you into Hell. Woe be unto you! But do you not know that Allah has said:

And whoever is niggardly is niggardly against his own soul(۱) and He has also said: And whoever is preserved from the niggardliness of his soul, is among the successful ones."(۲)

۲) Mansur Dawaaniqi and his Stinginess

Mansur Dawaaniqi, the second Abbasid Caliph, was well known for his stinginess and parsimony. For instance, as a result of his reluctance to part with his money, he would give the poets who came before him the following warning:

If someone, other than you, also happens to know the poetry that you are about to recite or if it is established that it belongs to someone else,

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۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Muhammad (۴۷), vs. ۳۸. (وَ مَنْ يَبْخَلْ فَإِنَّما يَبْخَلُ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ) Ibid, ch. Al-Hashr (۵۹), vs. ۹ ((وَ مَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

۲- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۱۰; I'lm-e-Akhlaaq-e-Islami, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۵۴.

you should not expect any prize or reward. And if the poet happened to recite one which was his own, Mansur would give him money according to the weight of the scroll upon which the poetry was written! Furthermore, he possessed a sharp memory and also had a servant and a slave-girl, who were extraordinarily quick at memorizing things.

When a poet recited his poetry, Mansur would say to him: "This, which you have recited for me, is not something new. Not only I, but even this slave of mine and the slave-girl, behind the curtains, know it."

Then, upon his orders, the slave would recite the poem after which, the slave-girl, having heard its recitation three times - once by the poet, once by Mansur and once by the slave - would also recite it. The astounded poet would then be sent off empty handed and without any reward!

Asmae'e, the renowned poet, became annoyed with the miserliness of Mansur and decided to compose a poem using difficult words and write it on a broken stone pillar. When this was done, he dressed himself up as a tribesman and covered his entire face except his eyes. He then presented himself before Mansur and with a disguised accent, informed him that he had composed some verses and sought his permission to recite them before him.

As usual, Mansur informed Asmae'e of the conditions, which he accepted. Then Asmae'e began reciting the poetry, which comprised of difficult and uncommon

words and intricate and complex sentences.(١) Mansur with all his acumen, and the slave and the slave-girl with all their sharpness of mind, were unable to memorize it and for the first time appeared bewildered and taken aback.

With no alternative left, Mansur said to him, "O' Brother! It appears that the poetry is your own work. Bring me your scroll so that I can reward you according to its weight."

Asmae'e said, "I could not find any paper and so I have written my poem on a stone pillar, which presently lies on my camel." He brought the stone pillar and placed it before Mansur, who was totally baffled. He realized that even if he were to place his entire treasury on one side of the scale, it would not match up to the weight of the stone pillar.

Turning to the poet and he inquired, "O' Arab! Are you not Asmae'e?"

Asmae'e took off the covering from his face and everyone observed that the poet was indeed Asmae'e.(٢)

٣) The Four Arab Misers

It has been said that there were four Arab misers.

The first of them was Hatiah. It has been narrated that one day, Hatian was standing at his doorstep with his staff in his hand when a person, passing by, said to him:

"O' Hatiah! I am your guest today."

Pointing to his staff, Hatiah tersely answered, "I use this staff to welcome and entertain my guests!"

The second of the misers was Hameed Arqat. In connection with him, it

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١- و العود قدد نددنلی، و الطبل طبطبطبلی   و الرقص قد طبطبلی، و السقف قد سقسقسقلی

٢- Daastaan-ha-e-Maa, vol. ٢, pg. ١٠٢; I'laam al-Naas, pg. ٥۴.

has been reported that once, he invited a few people to be his guests and offered them dates to eat. The guests, while eating the dates, also consumed the seeds .whereupon Hameed created uproar by rebuking them for eating his seeds as well

The third of the misers was a person by the name of Abul Aswad Duali. It has been :related that one day, he gave one date to a pauper, who said

".May God give you one date in Paradise "

Hearing this, Abul Aswad Duali commented, "If we give our things to the miserable "!ones, we shall become more miserable than them

The fourth of the misers was Khaalid Ibn Safwaan, about whom it has been reported :that whenever a dirham would come into his hands, he would say to it

O' Money! How much you have wandered and travelled before coming into my" hands. But (now that you have reached me,) I shall drop you into my safe and your ."captivity shall be a long and protracted one

.Saying this, he would drop the money into his chest and lock it

The people said to him, "Since you possess so much wealth and riches, why don't you "?give some of it as alms

(He replied: "I have a much longer life ahead of me."(۱

Zakaat from Tha'labah Ansaari not Accepted (۴

Once, Tha'labah Ibn Haatib Ansaari approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and :beseeched

".O' Prophet of God! Pray to God that He grants me wealth and riches"

Little wealth for which you are able to offer thanksgiving, is"

.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۹۳; Mustatraf, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۷۱ -۱

better than immense riches for which you are unable to offer thanksgiving," the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) advised him.

Tha'labah went away but approached the Holy Prophet for the second time, repeating his request.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said, "You shall not obey me. By God! If I wished that the mountains would turn into gold for me, they would do so."

For the second time, Tha'labah went away, but returned a third time and again placed his request before the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and implored, "Do pray for me. I avow that if God grants me wealth, whoever possesses a right in it, I shall give it to him."

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) prayed for him and God answered his prayers. Tha'labah initially purchased some sheep, which slowly grew in number till they became plentiful.

Earlier, he used to offer all his prayers behind the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) but after his wealth and riches began to increase, he would only be present for the Dhuhr and the A'sr prayers, and spent the rest of his time looking after his sheep.

As time passed, his work increased to such an extent that he could only manage to come to Madinah for the Friday prayers and eventually even this became a thing of the past. He would only come up to the road leading towards Madinah and seek news of the city from the passers-by.

One day, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) inquired about him, whereupon he was informed that Tha'labah's sheep had

increased manifold and he had settled outside Madinah. Hearing this, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) cried out three times: “Woe be unto Tha’labah!”

After a period of time, the verse pertaining to zakaat was revealed. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) selected two people, one from Bani Sulaim and the other from Juhniyah, and gave them written authority, empowering them to collect the zakaat.

Approaching Tha’labah, they read out the order for the collection of zakaat. After some thought, Tha’labah said:

“This is Jizyah(poll-tax)or something akin to it. Go and collect it from others and come back to me later.”

They proceeded to a person from the tribe of Bani Sulaim and read out the Holy Prophet’s (s.a.w.) orders at which he handed over the best of his camels to them as his zakaat. The collectors explained to him that they had not asked him to give the best of his camels, but he insisted by saying that he was giving the camel through his own choice.

The collectors collected the zakaat from the others and on the way back, again approached Tha’labah and sought his zakaat.

He said, “Let me have a look at that decree.”

After reading it, he once again repeated, “This appears to be Jizyah or something similar to it. Go away and let me ponder over it.”

The collectors returned to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), but before they could speak he exclaimed: “Woe unto Tha’labah!” and then prayed for the generous person from Bani Sulaim. The

collectors explicitly narrated to him their encounter with Tha’labah whereupon the following verses were revealed:

And there are those of them who made a covenant with Allah: If He gives us out of His grace, we will certainly give alms and we will certainly be of the righteous ones. But when He gave them out of His grace, they became niggardly of it and they turned back and they withdrew. So in consequence He effected hypocrisy e into their hearts till the day when they shall meet Him because they failed to fulfil towards Allah what they had promised with Him and because they told lies.(۱)

One of Tha’labah’s relatives, who had been present during the revelation of the above verses, informed him of the incident. On hearing about it, he hastened to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and entreated him to accept his zakaat, but he refused saying:

“God has ordered me not to accept your zakaat.”

Tha’labah was devastated to hear this.

“This is a consequence of your own deeds. I had ordered you but you refused to comply with my orders,” the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said.

After the demise of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), Tha’labah approached Abu Bakr, who refused to accept his zakaat. During U'mar’s caliphate, Thalabah approached him, but he too refused and U'thman too followed suit, till death finally overtook Tha’labah.(۲)

۵) Sa’eed Ibn Haroon, the Miser

Sa’eed Ibn Haroon, the scribe from Baghdad and a contemporary of Mamun, the Abbasid Caliph, was notorious for his miserliness.

Abu Ali Di’bil Khazaai, the

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۱ - Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Taubah (۹), vs. ۷۵-۷۷. وَ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ عاهَدَ اللّهَ لَئِنْ آتانا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الصّالِحِينَ فَلَمّا آتاهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَ تَوَلَّوْا وَ هُمْ مُعْرِضُون فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفاقاً فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلى يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهُ بِما أَخْلَفُوا اللّهَ ما وَعَدُوهُ

وَ بِما كانُوا يَكْذِبُون

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ١, pg. ٧٣; Asad al-Ghaabbah, vol. ١, pg. ٢٣٧ -٢

:renowned poet (d. ۲۴۵ A.H.) says

Accompanied by some other poets, I had gone to Sa’eed’s house and we were with him from morning till afternoon. When the afternoon was approaching, we began to .feel hungry and became restless and disturbed as a result

Sa’eed had an old slave, to whom he said, “If there is something to eat, bring it before us.” The slave departed and returned a short while later bringing with him a dirty dinner-cloth. He spread this out before us and laid just one piece of dry bread on it. He then brought an old bowl, broken at the rim and filled with hot water, and which !contained an old, raw and headless cock

As the slave placed the bowl on the dinner-cloth, Sa’eed’s eyes fell upon it and noticing the headless cock, he reflected for a moment and then said, “O’ Slave! Where ”?is the head of this cock

”.The slave replied, “I have thrown it away

Hearing this, Sa’eed screamed, “I do not approve of one who throws away the legs of a cock, never mind one who throws away its head. This act (of yours) augurs ill (for :me) for the head of a cock possesses many benefits

Firstly, from its head emanates a sound, which informs God’s servants of the time for prayers; by means of it, the sleeping ones awaken and those, who worship in the .nights, ready themselves for the night prayers

Secondly, the crown that lies on its head resembles

the crown of the kings and so, it possesses a distinction in comparison to the other .birds

Thirdly, it witnesses the angels by means of the two eyes, which are located in its skull. In addition, poets liken coloured wine to its eyes because when they desire to ’.describe red wine, they say: ‘This wine is like the two eyes of the cock

Fourthly, the brain in its head is a cure for kidney problems. Besides, no bone is tastier than the bone of its head. If you have thrown it away under the impression that I would not eat it, you have erred greatly. And supposing that I do not eat it, my family would eat it and if they do not eat it, these guests of mine, who have not eaten ”.anything since morning, would eat it

”.He continued angrily, “Go and locate it and should you fail to do so, I shall punish you

”.The slave pleaded “By God! I do not know where I have thrown it

Sa’eed retorted, “By God! I know where you have dropped it; you have dropped it in ”!that ominous looking stomach of yours

”.By God! I have not eaten it,” bemoaned the slave. You are the one who is lying“

Infuriated, Sa’eed stood up and seized the slave by the collar in an attempt to hurl him onto the floor, but in the process his foot struck the bowl tipping it over and spilling its contents. A cat, which

sat nearby, made the most of the opportunity and picking up the headless cock, darted away with it. We too came out of the house, leaving Sa'eed and his slave to themselves, as they grappled with each other.(١)

Evilness .١٧

point

Allah, the Wise, says:

عَسى - أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئاً وَ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ

(It may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you)(٢)

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) has said:

وَ إِنَّ الْعَمَلَ السَّيِّئَ أَسْرَعُ فِى صَاحِبِهِ مِنَ السِّكِّينِ فِى اللَّحْمِ

(Surely, the effect of an evil deed upon the doer is faster than that of a knife upon a piece of meat.)(٣)

Short Explanation

The worst of people is one, who sells his hereafter in exchange for his worldly life, but worse still is one, who sells his hereafter for the worldly lives of the others.

Evilness manifests itself in numerous forms, all of which could be summarized as disobedience to God.

Since deeds are subordinate to intentions, evil thoughts generate evil deeds. When a person does not have God within his sights, he considers himself to be strong and powerful. He indulges in various acts of evil, without his heart experiencing the slightest fear of Hell.

For each limb and organ of the body there are evil actions which are associated with and specific to them; the ears to backbiting, the eyes to seeing prohibited things, the tongue to lying and the hands to hurting the orphans. It is therefore essential to

.preserve all of them from evil

Misfortune of Jaludi (۱

After the martyrdom of Imam Kadhim (a.s.), Haroon Al-Rashid, the

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.Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ۳۴۱ -۱
.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah (۲), vs. ۲۱۶ -۲
.Jaame’ al-Sa’adaat, vol. ۳, pg. ۴۸ -۳

Abbasid Caliph dispatched one of his commanders, a person by the name of Jaludi, to Madinah and instructed him: “Attack the houses of the progeny of Abu Talib, loot the ”!womenfolk and leave behind nothing, except one apparel for each of them

Once in Madinah, Jaludi started to execute Haroon’s orders. As he neared the house of Imam Ridha (a.s.), the Imam (a.s.) gathered all the ladies of the house into one .room and stood at the door, preventing Jaludi from entering

Jaludi insisted that he must enter the house and loot the ladies and take away their apparels. The Imam (a.s.) promised that he himself would collect their clothes and ornaments and hand them over to Jaludi, on the condition that he should abstain from .entering the room

Jaludi eventually acquiesced to the Imam’s request, whereupon he entered the room, gathered the ornaments and clothes of the ladies and, together with the other things of the house, placed them at Jaludi’s disposal, which he promptly dispatched to .Haroon

After Haroon, it was his son Mamun, who took over the reins of the Caliphate. It so happened that one day he became angry with Jaludi and sought to punish him with death. Imam Ridha (a.s.) had been present in that assembly and requested Mamun to .forgive him

Jaludi, recollecting his previous wickedness with respect to the Imam, thought that he :(a.s.) would complain about it to Mamun and so, turning to Mamun, he said

!I place you under the oath of God“

".Do not accept his words in connection with me

Mamun said: "By God! I shall not accept his words." Saying this, he then ordered Jaludi (to be beheaded.(۱)

Deceit by A'mr Ibn A'as (۲

After the incident of arbitration, in which A'mr Ibn A'as tricked Abu Musa Asha'ri and deposed Ali (a.s.) from the caliphate, the Imam (a.s.) used to curse him, Mua'wiyah .and Abu Musa after the morning and Maghrib prayers

A'mr Ibn A'as was also part of the group that was involved in the incident of the night of A'qabah(۲) and had subsequently been cursed by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon .him and his holy progeny) too

When the dispute between Imam Ali (a.s.) and Mua'wiyah intensified, it was decided that the issue should be resolved by means of arbitration. Unfortunately, the people of Iraq selected Abu Musa Asha'ri to represent the Imam (although, the Imam himself was not happy at this selection), whereas Mua'wiyah decided on A'mr Ibn A'as as his .representative

Abu Musa, who was in one of the villages of Shaam, was asked to present himself in Siffeen and four hundred people, amongst them Shuraih Ibn Haani and Ibn A'bbas, accompanied him to Daumah al-Jundal. A'mr Ibn A'as also arrived there with four .hundred of his companions

All the counselling and recommendations provided to Abu Musa proved futile since A'mr Ibn A'as, with the evilness of intention and wickedness of character that he .possessed, was far more powerful than him in shrewdness and deception

One of A'mr Ibn A'as's techniques was to

.Raahnama-e-Sa'adat, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۷۷; Aa'yaan al-Shia'h, vol. ۱, pg. ۶۰ -۱

After the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had proclaimed Ali -٢ (peace be upon him) his successor at Ghadeer Khum, some individuals gathered together and conspired to conceal themselves near a mountain path and startle the camel of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) in order that he is hurled to the ground and killed, and in this manner sought to prevent the caliphate of Ali (peace be upon him) from being established in Madinah, and this is the night, which ’is referred to as the ‘night of ‘Aqabah

exhibit exaggerated deference towards Abu Musa. He sat him in the front of gatherings and insisted that he lead the prayers, while Amr himself prayed behind him, and all the while addressing him as O' Companion of the Prophet of God! He used to say to him: "You have had a precedence over me with regards to the companionship of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and are elder to me and thus, it is .”unbecoming of me to speak on something before you have done so

He presented such an elaborate display of respect that the simple-minded Abu Musa was convinced of his uprightness and became certain that his only intention was to set aright the existing state of affairs. As part of his cunning plan, A'mr Ibn A'as initially took Abu Musa to a secluded place and spoke to him in solitude so as to prevent .others from influencing Abu Musa in making a decision

A'mr Ibn A'as asked him, "Abu Musa, what is your opinion regarding Ali (a.s.) and "?Mua'wiyah

Let us depose Ali (a.s.) and Mua'wiyah from the caliphate and allow the issue of" .caliphate to be managed by a Counsel," responded Abu Musa

Hearing this A'mr Ibn A'as said, "By God! Your opinion is absolutely correct and we ".must put it into execution

.After agreeing to this course of action, they came out in public

Abu Musa rose up first and began to speak when Ibn A'bbas cried out, "Be wary, for I fear A'mr Ibn A'as has tricked

".you. Allow him to speak before you

But Abu Musa paid no heed and said, "O' People! A'mr Ibn A'as and I remove Ali and Mua'wiyah from the caliphate and shall (only) approve of a caliph selected by means ".of a Counsel. I hereby remove Ali (a.s.) from the caliphate

Then, the wicked A'mr Ibn A'as stood up and said, "I too remove Ali from the caliphate but appoint Mua'wiyah in his place; Mua'wiyah seeks to avenge U'thman's death and ".is therefore most deserving of this rank

You are like a dog," Abu Musa shrieked out, "that attacks if one approaches it and" ".does the same if one turns away from it

A'mr Ibn A'as retaliated, "And you are like a donkey, which carries a hoard of books ".((but does not benefit from them in the least

In short, A'mr Ibn A'as, supported by his evilness, emerged the victor in the issue of arbitration! Later, Ibn A'bbas used to say: "May God disgrace Abu Musa! I had warned him of the guiles and the evil intentions of A'mr Ibn A'as and advised him rightly, but (he turned a deaf ear and refused to take heed."(١

Cruelty of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf Thaqafi (٣

It is not just evil deeds which merit chastisement but evil intentions too tend to have an impact. In fact it is due to their evil intentions that the disbelievers and the enemies .(of Islam) shall reside in Hell eternally

Hajjaaj Ibn Yusuf Thaqafi used to exhibit great cruelty and evil by imprisoning and killing the

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.Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ١, pg. ١٣٩ – ١۵٣; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ٨, pg. ۵۴۴ -١

.((.saadaat (descendants of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w

Once, while coming out of the mosque and hearing the wailing and crying of a great number of people, he asked, “Who are these who wail?”

Those around him said, “These are the wailings of the captives, who are tormented due to the intense heat of the sun.”

He said, “ Tell them اِخسئُوا (scram away),”which, in the Arabic language, is also employed for driving away a dog.(۱)

His prison contained ۱۲۰,۰۰۰ males and ۲۰,۰۰۰ females (۴,۰۰۰ of the females being single) and was one large area, walled but roofless. Each time the prisoners tried to shelter themselves from the scorching sun, either with their hands or some other means, the guards overlooking them would strike them with stones.

Their food was bread, made of barley and mixed with sand, while their drink was bitter water. At times the blood of the saadaat and the righteous ones would be utilized for preparing Hajjaaj’s bread, which he would eat with great relish!

This wicked person always regretted not having been in Kerbala and used to say, “O’ How I wish I had been in Kerbala so that I could have had a hand in killing Imam Husain (a.s.) and his companions!”(۲)

۴) Justifying Evil Acts

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) had heard that an old man had become famous for his piety. One day, he saw him surrounded by a large crowd. A little later, the man came out of the crowd and distancing himself from them, proceeded alone, whereupon the Imam (a.s.) began to

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۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mu’minun (۲۳), vs. ۱۰۸: (اخْسَؤُا فِيها وَ لا تُكَلِّمُونِ) – an address to the inmates of Hell

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ٣, pg. ١۶٣; Raudhaat al-Jannaat, pg. ١٣٣ -٢

follow him. After a short time, the Imam (a.s.) observed that he had stopped near a bakery from where he stealthily picked up two loaves of bread. After a short distance, he stopped at a fruit store, picking up two pomegranates in the same manner and once again continued on his way.

As he walked further, the old man approached a sick person, handed over the loaves and fruits to him and was about to move on when Imam Sadiq (a.s.) came up to him and said, “I have witnessed something greatly astonishing from you”, and then proceeded to narrate the acts, which he had witnessed.

The old man said, “I suppose you are Imam Sadiq (a.s.).”

The Imam (a.s.) replied in the affirmative.

The man continued, “It is really unfortunate that in spite of being of the progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) you do not seem to know anything.”

The Imam (a.s.) asked, “What act of ignorance have you noticed from me?”

The man said, “But do you not know that God has said in the Qur'an “Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like of it”.(١)

On this basis, since I have stolen two fruits and two loaves of bread, I have four sins in my account, but on the other hand, since I have given it in the way of God, I have earned forty good deeds. Reducing four from forty, I

١- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-An’Am (۶), vs. ١۶٠: (مَنْ جاءَ بِالْحَسَنَهِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثالِها وَ مَنْ جاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَهِ فَلا يُجْزى إِلاَّ مِثْلَها)

still have thirty-six good deeds in my account; a pity that you possess no knowledge "!of such computations

The Imam (a.s.) explained to him, "But have you not heard this verse of the Qur'an, which says: "Allah only accepts from those who guard (against evil)".(١) You have earned four sins by stealing those four items and four more sins for giving them tosomeone else without the permission of the owners, so you have collected eight ".sins but not a single good deed

Later, the Imam (a.s.) said to his companions, "With such interpretations and justifications, not only do they mislead themselves, but others as well."(٢)

The Consequence of Evil Deeds in Barzakh (۵

:A distinguished scholar, renowned for his piety, narrates

One of my relatives had purchased a property during the last years of his life, utilizing .the abundant income derived from it, for fulfilling his needs

After he died, I witnessed him in the purgatory, in a state of blindness. When I asked :him reason for it, he replied

I had purchased a piece of land, in the centre of which existed a well, whose water" was utilized by the inhabitants of a nearby village for themselves and their animals. But their passage through my land used to damage a portion of my crops and so, in order to protect my income and to prevent them from coming in, I filled up the well by means of sand and stones, and covered it up. As a result, the hapless inhabitants were forced to travel a great distance to procure their

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١- Ibid, ch. Al-Maidah (۵), vs. ٢٧: (إِنَّما يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ)
٢- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۴, pg. ٢٧۵; Wasaail al-Shia'h, vol. ٢, pg. ۵٧.

".water, and this blindness is an outcome of that act of mine

"?I asked him, "Is there any solution to this problem of yours

He replied, "If my heirs were to exhibit mercy upon me and uncover the well so that ".the others benefit from its water again, I shall come out of this predicament of mine

Approaching his heirs, I informed them of the incident. They agreed to do the needful and very soon, the well was opened up and the people began to make use of it, as .before

After a period, I again witnessed the deceased, but this time noticed that his sight had been restored and he was thankful to me for helping him come out of his misery.[1]

Misfortunes .۱۸

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَاَمَّا الْاِنْسانُ اِذا ما ابْتَلاهُ رَبُّهُ فَاَكْرَمَهُ وَ نَعَّمَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّى اَكْرَمَنِ

(And as for man, when his Lord tries him, then treats him with honor and makes him lead an easy life, he says: My Lord has honoured me.)[2]

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has said

اِنَّ الْبَلاءَ لِلظّالِمِ اَدَبٌ وَ لِلْمُؤمِنِ اِمْتِحانٌ

(Surely, misfortune for an oppressor is a (corrective) chastisement and for a Mu'min, a trial)[3]

Short Explanation

For someone possessing intellect, misfortunes are a means of ornamentation and esteem. Exercising forbearance when faced with misfortune and being steadfast .during trials, strengthens one's faith

One who bears hardship with patience, shall acquire the Grace of God and, as dictated by the Divine Wisdom, shall attain salvation and comfort, either in this world or in the hereafter.

From within the flames

p: ١١٨

١- Daastaan-ha-e-Shigift, pg. ٢٩٢.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Fajr (٨٩), vs. ١٥.

٣- Jaame' al-Akhbaar, pg. ١١٣.

of misfortune and calamity, emerge the esoteric lights. A person who regards misfortune and calamity as a trial, and combats it successfully, will become that much wiser as a result of the extra knowledge and perception acquired. It is not good practice to constantly complain of worldly misfortunes like poverty, illness, family .problems, and so on

In the Company of Angels (١

One of the patient Muslims, uncomplaining in the face of misfortunes, was a person by the name of I'mraan. He had come to suffer from dropsy(١) and no amount of .treatment proved productive

For thirty years he lay upon his stomach, unable to rise, sit or stand and so, a pit had .been dug near his place of rest for his urine and excrement

Once, his brother A'laa, paid him a visit and observing his pitiful state, burst out in "?tears. I'mraan asked, "Why do you weep

His brother replied, "It is because I see that for years you have been suffering in this ".pathetic condition

I'mraan said, "Weep not and do not be disturbed because this state, which God has ordained for me, is dearer to me than anything else; I desire to remain in this condition, which God desires for me, for as long as I am alive. I shall now inform you of a secret, which you must not divulge to anyone for as long as I am alive: I am in the company of the angels; they greet me and I reply to their greetings, and enjoy a

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A sickness, in which a person suffers swelling of the stomach, consumes an - ١ inordinate quantity of water and experiences extraordinary thirst. (Farhang-e- .(A'meed

(great intimacy with them." (۱

Ali A'abid in Prison (۲

Ali A'bid (Ali Ibn Hasan Al-Muthallath) was one of the children of Imam Hasan (a.s.) who had been imprisoned by Mansur Dawaaniqi and had died while still in prison. Ali A'bid was unsurpassed in his patience, worship and remembrance of God.

When Mansur arrested the descendants of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and the children of Imam Hasan (a.s.), he placed them in a prison that was so dark that day could not be differentiated from night, except by means of the recitations and acts of worship of Ali A'abid. These acts were disciplined, orderly and continuous, and therefore made the others aware of the time for prayers.

One day, due to the hardships of captivity and the weight of his fetters, A'bdullah Ibn Hasan Al-Muthanna lost patience and in a state of great agitation, said to Ali A'abid:

"Do you not witness our misfortunes and adversities? Do you not pray to God to grant us relief from this suffering of ours?"

Ali A'abid remained silent for a while after which he said, "O' Uncle! There exists for us a (lofty) rank in Paradise, which we can never achieve except by exhibiting patience over theseor even more severe adversities, and there exists for Mansur a dreadful place within Hell, which he shall never reach except by subjecting us to such persecution. If we are patient, we shall soon find ourselves in ease and comfort, for death is not very far from us. But if you desire,

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۱- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۷, pg. ۱۴۸; La-aali al-Akhbaar, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۴۶.

I shall pray for our deliverance, but in that case, Mansur shall not reach that stage of ".wretchedness, which has been ordained for him, within Hell

".Hearing this, A'bdullah immediately said, "We shall be patient

Hardly three days had passed when, Ali A'abid passed away while in a state of ".prostration. A'bdullah thought him to be asleep and said, "Wake up my nephew

As they attempted to move him, they found that he would not wake up and it was (then they realized that he had died.(١

An Enemy Ordained for a Mu'min (٣

Prophet Hud (a.s.) used to farm. Once, a group of people came to his house to meet :him. His wife came to the door and asked

"?Who is it"

They replied, "We have come from such and such city, which has been afflicted with famine and we are on the verge of destruction. We have come to Prophet Hud (a.s.) to ".request him to pray for the rains

The wife of Hud (a.s.) remarked, "If his prayers had been answered, he would have ".prayed for himself; his own crops are withering away due to lack of water

"?They persisted, "Where is he at present

She informed them of his whereabouts whereupon the group approached him and placed their request before him. Prophet Hud (a.s.) offered prayers and then supplicated, after which he turned to them and said, " You may return for it has rained ".over your city

But as they sought to take his leave, they asked him, "When we approached your house we had come

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۷۲; Maqtal-e-Khwaarzami, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۰۸ -۱

across a lady, who said: 'If the prayers of Hud were to have been answered, would he not have prayed for himself?'

Prophet Hud (a.s.) said, "That woman is my wife and I pray to God to grant her a long life." "Why do you pray so?" asked the people.

He replied, "God has not created a Mu'min except that He has also ordained an enemy for him to trouble him. This woman is my enemy and an enemy of whom I am the master, is better than an enemy, who happens to be my master." (۱)

۴) Muhammad Ibn Abi U'mair Served Three Imams

Muhammad Ibn Abi U'mair had the opportunity of serving Imam Kadhim, Imam Ridha and Imam Jawad (a.s.) and both, the Sunnites and the Shiites, have attested to his trustworthiness and uprightness.

He was a cloth-merchant by profession and financially very well off. He wrote ninety-four books on traditions and jurisprudence. Due to his stateliness, and his knowledge of the names of the Shiites, he used to be greatly troubled during the period of Haroon Al-Rashid and Mamun; he would be abused, imprisoned and his property would be seized. He was asked to become a judge, but he declined the offer; since he was familiar with the Shiites of Iraq, he was asked to reveal their names, but he refused to comply so they flung him into prison and, on numerous occasions, he was whipped so severely that he was barely left alive. Once, upon the orders of Haroon Al-Rashid,

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۱- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۶۱۲.

Sindi Ibn Shaahak subjected him to a hundred and twenty lashes and he had to purchase his freedom by paying one thousand dirhams. Financially, he suffered a loss .of a hundred thousand dirhams and his captivity extended for a period of four years

His sister (Sa'eedah or Minnah) gathered all his books and concealed them, but it so happened that one day it rained and all his books were ruined. Later, the traditions that he used to narrate were either from the sharp memory, which he possessed, or from copies, which others had transcribed from his original books before their (destruction.(١

A Long Life is Associated with Misfortunes (٥

It has been reported that once Jibraeel (peace be upon him) approached Prophet Sulaiman (a.s.), bringing with him a bowl containing the Water of Life and said to him: Your Lord has given you the choice that if you so choose, you can drink this water and .remain alive till the Day of Judgment

Sulaiman (a.s.) placing this issue before a group of men, jinn and animals, consulted them and all of them recommended him to consume the water so that he could .become eternal

Sulaiman, after some reflection realized that he had not conferred with the porcupine and so sent a horse to call him, but the porcupine did not arrive. He then sent a dog !after him, whereupon he arrived immediately

Sulaiman (a.s.) said to him, "Before I confer with you about my issue, I would like to know why, when I sent the horse, the most honorable of

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.Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ٢, pg. ٣٥٨ -١

all animals after man, you did not arrive, but when I sent the dog, the most vile of all the animals, you presented yourself immediately?"

The porcupine replied, "The horse, in spite of being an honorable animal, does not possess loyalty, whereas the dog, despite being the most despicable, possesses it; if it receives a loaf of bread from someone, it would remain loyal to him all throughout its life."

Sulaiman (a.s.) then said, "A bowl containing the Water of Life has been sent to me and I have been given the choice of either accepting it or refusing it. All the others have advised me to drink it in order that I become eternal."

The porcupine said, "Is this Water of Life only for you or are your children, family and friends permitted to consume it too?"

He said, "No! It is solely for me."

The porcupine then advised, "It is advisable that you do not accept it, for when you acquire a long life, all your children, relatives and friends shall depart before you, every passing day bringing you face to face with misfortune and sorrow thereby making your life miserable for you.Sulaiman (a.s.) approved of this advice and heeding it, returned the Water of Life.(١)

١٩. Sickness

point

Allah, the Wise, says:

وَ اِذاَ مَرِضْتُ فَهُو يشْفِينِ

(And when I am sick, then He restores me to health)(٢)

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) has said:

اَشَدُّ مِنَ الْفاَقَهِ مَرَضُ الْبَدَن

(More calamitous than poverty is the sickness of the body)(۳)

Short Explanation

One of the treasures of Paradise, which

p: ۱۲۴

1- Jawaame' al-Hikaayaat, pg. ۹۵.
2- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Shua'raa (۲۶), vs. ۸۰.
3- Nahjul Balaghah (of Faidh al-Islam), pg. ۱۲۷۰.

reaches a Mu'min in this world, is sickness. If a Mu'min, occasionally and unintentionally, falters and commits sins, God does not like him to return to Him carrying the burden of his sins; He thus afflicts him with illness in order that his sins .are forgiven

A person who suffers from illness, beseeches and supplicates to God to restore his good health and God likes this state of a sick person, for He desires His servant to converse and communicate with Him. At times, God afflicts a person with sickness in .order to elevate him in spiritual rank and status

The best amongst those who are ill is one who exercises patience in this suffering, conceals his pain and desists from complaining about his disease to others until he .regains his health and acquires the maximum reward ordained for him

The Rank of a Worshipper who Suffers from Illness (۱

One day, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) raised his head towards the heavens and then laughed. One of his companions asked him the reason for his laughter to which the :Prophet (s.a.w.) replied saying

My laughter was out of my astonishment. Two angels had descended from the" heavens to record the deeds of a righteous Mu'min. They always found him on his prayer mat, engaged in worship, but this time, they noticed that he was not there. He was in his bed, having been afflicted with sickness. They ascended towards the heavens and said to God: O' Lord! We did not find Your servant in his usual place of

.worship but instead, found him lying on his bed in a state of sickness

God said to them: Until he regains his health, record for him all acts of worship and deeds of goodness that he used to perform when healthy. It is necessary for Us, for as long as he remains in the captivity (of sickness), to grant him rewards of all the .(good deeds that he used to perform, when possessing soundness of health"(١

!My Daughter has Never Fallen Ill (٢

Once, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) sought a lady's hand in marriage. Her father began :praising her and while enumerating her virtues, he uttered

".From the time she was born till today, she has never fallen sick"

.As soon as the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) heard this, he immediately left the gathering

Later, he said, "There is no goodness in an entity which, like a zebra, never falls sick. Diseases and misfortunes are God's gifts to His servants that should they ever become negligent of Him, diseases and misfortunes serve to make people mindful of (Him." (٢

Patience in Sickness (٣

:Abu Muhammad Riqqi says

Once, I arrived in the presence of Imam Ridha (a.s.) and greeted him. He replied to my .greetings, inquired after my health and began to converse with me

In the course of the conversation, all of a sudden he said, "O' Abu Muhammad! Every Mu'min, whom God afflicts with a misfortune and who exhibits patience over it, shall ".surely come to possess the rank and recompense of a martyr in the eyes of God

I wondered, "In what connection

.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۶, pg. ١٣٠; Tafsir Nur al-Thaqalain, vol. ۵, pg. ۶٨ -١

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۸۰ -۲

did the Imam (a.s.) speak this? We had not been talking about misfortunes and "?calamities for the Imam (a.s.) to have suddenly come up with this kind of speech

I bid farewell to the Imam (a.s.) and proceeded towards my friends and fellow travellers, when suddenly I experienced a pain in my leg. I passed the night in great pain and when morning dawned, I noticed that my legs had become inflamed. After a period, this inflammation became more severe. I remembered the speech of Imam Ridha (a.s.) in which he had recommended patience in the face of misfortune and how .I had thought it to be out of place then

In this state I reached Madinah, but there, a large wound developed in my leg, oozing pus. The pain was so excruciating that I could not be at peace. I then realized that the Imam (a.s.) had visualized such a phenomenon when he had spoken to me and advised me to keep calm by means of patience. For ten months, I was bed-ridden as a .result of this sickness

The narrator says: After a period, Abu Muhammad regained his health only to fall ill (once again, eventually passing away in that sickness.(۱

Imam Sajjad helps the Lepers (۴

Once, Imam Sajjad (a.s.) encountered some lepers sitting on the roadside and eating their food. Greeting them, he passed by, when all of a sudden he stopped and said to :himself

".God does not like the haughty ones"

Having said this, he retraced his

.Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۶۶; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۴۹, pg. ۵۱ -۱

steps and approaching the lepers, said, "Presently, I am in a state of fasting (and thus unable to sit down and share your food). (However) I invite you to come to my house ".and be my guests

They accepted the offer and went to his house, where the Imam (a.s.) fed them and (helped them by giving them some money.(١

The Sick Person's Debt Paid (۵

Usaamah Ibn Zaid was one of the companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). Once, he fell ill and so Imam Husain (a.s.) paid him a visit. Approaching him, the Imam observed .him to be greatly disturbed, repeatedly moaning and exhibiting great anguish

The Imam (a.s.) said to him, "Brother, what causes you to be so disturbed and "?worried

.I am burdened by a debt of sixty thousand dinars." he replied"

The Imam (a.s.) consoled him by saying, " I take the responsibility of clearing your ".debt

".Usaamah persisted, "I fear I may die before my debt is repaid

The Imam (a.s.) said, "Do not worry! I shall clear your debt before your death." Having (said this, Imam Husain (a.s.) ordered his debt to be paid off immediately.(٢

Parents .۲۰

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَلَا تَقُل لَهُما اُفٍّ وَ لَا تَنْهَرهُما

(Say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them)(٣)

:The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said

بِرُّ الْوالِدَینِ اَفضَلُ مِنَ الصَّلاهِ وَ الصَّومِ وَ الْحَجِّ وَ الْعُمْرَهِ وَ الْجِهادِ فِی سَبیلِ اللهِ

Kindness towards parents is better than prayers, fasts, Hajj, U'mrah and jihad in the path of Allah.(۴)

Short Explanation

In (several places in) the Qur'an, God has

p: ۱۲۸

۱- Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Kuneem, pg. ۳۸.

۲- Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۹۳; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۱۰, pg. ۴۳.

۳- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Israa (۱۷), vs. ۲۳.

۴- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۶۴.

spoken about the very subtle issue of ‘kindness towards the parents’, attaching such immense importance to it that He has even said: Say not to them (so much as) "Ugh" .nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word

It is evident from this that it is not only forbidden to annoy parents in any way but it is obligatory to exhibit goodness and kindness towards them. People who hurt their parents, even occasionally, must seek their forgiveness and happiness before they suffer the evil consequences. They should remember that their children, in turn, .would ill-treat them too

As for the repercussions in the Hereafter, the holy Prophet has said that if for every instance of hurting others one door of Hell opens up for man, then two doors of Hell (will open up for he who causes inconvenience to his parents.(١

The Mother’s Pleasure (١

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) approached a youth who was dying and said to him: “O’ Youth! Say ‘Laa ilaaha illallah”,but the youth’s tongue would not move and he was .unable to speak the sentence

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.)asked the gathering crowd if the youth’s mother was present. A lady, who stood near the head of the dying person, stepped forward and .said she was his mother

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked her if she was pleased with her son to which she ”.responded: “No. I have not spoken to him for the past six years

”.He said, “O’ Lady! Forgive him and be pleased with him

The lady

.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ١٢٩ -١

"!agreed and said, "For your sake, I forgive him. May God be pleased with him

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) again turned to the youth and asked him to testify to the Unity of God and this time, having procured his mother's pleasure, the youth was able .to do so

"?The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) asked him, "O' Youth! What do you witness at this moment

He said, "I see an extremely ugly person who has a foul odour coming from him and ".who is waiting to strangle me

The Prophet (s.a.w.) then instructed the youth to recite the following supplication: O' He, Who accepts trivial (good) deeds and disregards the immense sins! Accept from me my trivial (good) deeds and disregard my immense sins, for you are the All-.Forgiving and the All-Merciful

When the youth had recited this supplication, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him .and his holy progeny) asked him once more what he was witnessing

He replied, "I now see a man with a luminous and pleasing appearance. He is wearing beautiful clothes and possesses an enchanting fragrance. He is exhibiting kindness (andcourtesy towards me".(Having said this, the youth passed away).(۱)

The Companion of Prophet Musa in Paradise (۲

:Once, while conversing with God, Prophet Musa (a.s.) requested

".O' Lord! I desire to meet the person, who is to be my companion in Paradise"

Jibraeel descended and informed him that his companion was to be a butcher who lived in a certain place. Prophet Musa (a.s.) set out in search of him and arrived at his shop, when

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.Darshai Az Zindagi-e-Payaambar, pg. ۱۱۶; Al-Amaali (Sheikh Al-Tusi), vol. ۱, pg. ۶۳ -۱

.he noticed a youth, resembling a night watchman, busy selling meat

When night fell, the youth took some meat and proceeded towards his house. Musa .(a.s.) followed him till they reached there

Musa (a.s.) approached the youth and said, “Would you not like to have a guest?” The .youth willingly agreed and took him inside

Musa (a.s.) watched the youth preparing some food. When he had finished, he brought down a large basket from the upper storey. Bringing out an old and wizened woman from inside it, he washed her and then proceeded to feed her with his own hands. When the youth was about to carry the basket back to its original place, Musa (a.s.) noticed the old lady’s lips move as she mumbled something incomprehensible. .The youth then brought food for him and both of them ate their dinner

”?Musa inquired, “What is your relation with this old lady

The youth replied, “She is my mother and since my financial state does not allow me ”.to purchase a slave-girl for her, I myself strive to serve and look after her

Musa questioned further, “What did your mother mumble before you took her ”?upstairs

He responded, “Whenever I wash her and feed her, she prays: May God forgive you ”.and place you in the company and in the rank of Prophet Musa (a.s.) in Paradise

Hearing this, Musa (a.s.) said, “O’ Youth! I give you glad tidings; God has accepted your mother’s prayers and Jibraeel has informed me that

(you shall be my companion in Paradise!"(1)

The Curse of a Mother (3

In the tribe of Bani Israel, there lived a pious person by the name of Jareeh, who used to engage himself in God's worship, in his monastery. One day, his mother approached him while he was busy in prayer and, as a result, he did not respond to her. She approached him for a second time, but again, Jareeh did not answer.

When this happened for the third time, she became angry and cursed him saying, "I pray to God that He does not help you!"

The next day a prostitute came up to his monastery and giving birth to a child there, declared:

"This is Jareeh's child whom I have given birth to."

This created uproar among the people, who thought: "The very person, who used to rebuke us for fornication, has committed it himself." The king ordered him to be sent to the gallows.

When Jareeh's mother came to know of this, she began beating her face in distress whereupon he said to her, "Keep quiet, for it is due to your curse that I find myself in this predicament."

The people asked him, "O' Jareeh! How can we know that you speak the truth?"

He told them to bring the child to him.

When the child was brought, he prayed and then questioned the child, "Who is your father?" The child, with divine power and permission, said, "My father is such and such a shepherd belonging to such and such a tribe."

This incident

.(Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ١, pg. ۶٨; Tuhfa-e-Shaahi (Faadhil Kaashifi -١

saved Jareeh's life after which he vowed never to separate from his mother and to serve her throughout her life.(1)

4) The Truthful Barber

The distinguished scholar, Sheikh Baqir Kadhimi, who lived near Najaf-e-Ashraf, narrates that a truthful barber, once related the following story:

I had an old father, whom I served diligently. I exercised such great care never to be neglectful towards him, that I would even place water for him in the toilet and remain in wait outside till he emerged. All throughout (the week) I would be watchful of him, except on Wednesday evenings when I would proceed to Masjid-e-Sahlah hoping to meet Imam Mahdi (a.s.).

One Wednesday I was very busy and did not find a spare moment until it was almost sunset. Nevertheless, I set off towards Masjid-e-Sahlah alone in the dark.

It was a moonlit night and I still had one third of the journey to cover when suddenly I observed an Arab, seated on a horse, coming towards me. I said to myself, "This Arab is surely going to loot me", but when he had come closer, he spoke in the local dialect, and sought to know where I was heading for.

I told him that I intended to go to Masjid-e-Sahlah, whereupon he inquired if I had anything with me to eat. When I replied that I did not, he spoke with some sternness, and said:

"You have some food in your pocket."

Putting my hand into my pocket, I found some raisins, which I

1- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ٢, pg. ٥٤٨; Hayaat Al-Quloob, vol. ١, pg. ٤٨٢.

.had purchased for my son but had forgotten to give him

The Arab then said: "I recommend you to serve your father", and, repeating this three .times, he suddenly disappeared

It was only later that I realized that it was Imam Mahdi (a.s.) himself that I had seen and that he was not pleased that I stopped serving my father, even for the purpose of (going to Masjid-e-Sahlah on Wednesday evenings.(۱

Striking the Father (۵

Abu Quhafah, the father of Abu Bakr, was one of the enemies of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). Once, he abused the Prophet (s.a.w.) and so, his son Abu Bakr took hold of him .and pounded him against the door

When the news of this incident reached the ears of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w), he called :for Abu Bakr and asked

"?Did you do such a thing to your father"

.Abu Bakr replied in the affirmative

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) then said, "Go away, but from now on, do not behave in this (manner with your father." (۲

.Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۷۶; Najm al-Thaaqib -۱

Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۱۰, pg. ۱۲۸; Wasaail al-Shia'h, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۱۵ (Old - ۲ (Publication

Part ۲

point

.Moral stories from the lives of the prophets, the Ahlul Bayt, and their companions

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the late Vice President of the World Federation, Sultan Davdani, a sublime leader with qualities of compassion and quiet optimism, who .believed that the greatest sin was to remain passive in the face of challenges

Foreword

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The concept of morality has existed since the creation of mankind. In the old days, there was a clear distinction between 'good' morals and 'bad' morals although people did not always follow the former. During modern times, the distinction between good and bad has become blurred and morality has been significantly diluted. As a result, .there is a danger that immorality will prevail over morality throughout the world

There is no excuse for a Muslim to get caught in this quagmire. There is clear guidance from Allah through Noble Qur'an and the Prophets and Ma'sumin. Prophet Muhammad ▯ himself said, "I have been sent for the purpose of perfecting morals." One of the best ways of understanding morality is by studying practical examples .from the lives of Prophets and Ma'sumin

A few books have been written on moral stories emanating from the Islamic world, one

of them being ‘Pearls of Wisdom’, published by the Islamic Education Board of World Federation in March ۱۹۹۳. Bearing in mind the importance of the subject of Akhlaqiyat, IEB-WF is publishing ‘Anecdotes for Reflection’ in ۵ parts. The source of this publication is the book ‘Yaksad Mawzu’ wa ۵۰۰ Dastan’ by Sayyid Ali Akber Sadaqat. The translation from Farsi to English was carried out by Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi. IEB – WF would like to thank Sayyid Ali Akber Sadaqat and Shaykh Shahnawaz .Mahdavi for their efforts and we pray to Allah (SWT) to reward them amply

May Allah (SWT) accept this work as a further attempt by IEB – WF to propagate .Islam

Islamic Education Board

The World Federation of K S I Muslim Communities

Muharram ۱۴۲۶ / February ۲۰۰۵

Transliteration Table

The method of transliteration of Islamic terminology from the ‘Arabic language has .been carried out according to the standard transliteration table mentioned below

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(SWT)

Glory and Greatness be to Him – Used for Allah

(S)

Prayers be upon him and his family – Used for the Prophet Muhammad

(as)

[Peace be upon him – Used for noble personalities [Masculine

(as)

[Peace be upon her – Used for noble personalities [Feminine

Introduction

There are numerous ways for man to achieve guidance and emerge from darkness and move towards light. Allah (SWT), for the prosperity of man and perfection of his morals, has created proofs, evidences and vestiges,(۱) so great in number that they are beyond reckoning and computation. For the guidance of mankind, He sent the

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۱- Noble Qur'an, Surat Ibrahim (۱۴), Verse ۵ وَ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنا مُوسى بِآياتِنا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُماتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

Prophets with clear proofs(۱), books, miracles and signs so that, perhaps, the people might perceive the right path and attain prosperity and success.

During the entire period of his prophethood, the Noble Prophet (S), with regards to refinement of souls and perfection of morals, was an exemplar in speech and deed, and had (even) said, “I have been sent (as a Prophet) for (the purpose of) perfecting (the morals.” (۲)

Man’s problem lies in his disregard for virtues, acquisition of vices, and inclination towards lust and obedience to Shaitan. Some men stoop so low that they even lead their lives akin to animals. For the purpose of refinement and treatment of human morals, abatement of rebelliousness and controlling the natural disposition, the Noble Prophet (S) spared no effort and mentioned all that was necessary in this regard.

Attainment of prosperity in this world and the Hereafter is only accomplished under the auspices of a teacher and, at the same time, not every person can completely identify the two extremes of moral behaviour in order to demonstrate the moderate and balanced path. Allah, Who is the Absolute Wise, introduced all the Prophets, especially the Noble Prophet (S), as the ‘teacher and trainer’ of morals, so that the people, by following in his footsteps, distance themselves from vices and acquire the honour of the two worlds.

In the Qur’an, there exists a chapter by the name of القَصَص (The Narratives), which itself is proof that man is in need of stories and narratives.

In many

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۱ - Ibid, Suratul Hadid (۵۷), Verse ۲۵ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنا رُسُلَنا بِالْبَيِّناتِ وَ أَنْزَلْنا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتابَ وَ الْمِيزانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

۲ - Safinatul Bihar, Volume ۱, Page ۴۱۱ .بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكارِمَ الأَخْلَاقِ

places in the Qur’an, stories of Prophets, kings and nations have been mentioned. In addition, Allah has presented issues pertaining to wars, peace, family, religion, society and other similar topics, in the form of stories and narratives. By reading these accounts, the people can comprehend and distinguish the paths of progress and regress, and ascent and descent in every field, especially morals.

The entire chapter Yusuf has been devoted to the story of Yusuf, Ya’qub, Zulaikha and the brothers. In the beginning of the Chapter, Allah says: “We narrate to you (O’ Prophet) the most excellent of the narratives by (means of) what We have revealed to you this Qur’an.”(١)

While, in the concluding verse of this very chapter, He says: “Indeed (there) in the histories of theirs, is a lesson for men of understanding.”(٢)

Indeed, one of the distinguished feats of the Qur’an is this very story of Yusuf (as), which it refers to as the ‘best of the narratives’, and at the end of which, it says: “In these stories there is a lesson for those, who desire to take a moral and adopt the path of the Perfect Men.”

In this regard, Amirul Mo’minin (as), in Nahjul Balagha says to his son Imam Hasan (as): “Even though I have not reached the age, which those before me have, yet I have looked into their behaviour and reflected over the events of their lives. I walked amongst their ruins till I was as one of them. In fact,

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١- Noble Qur’an, Surat Yusuf (١٢), Verse ٣ نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِما أَوْحَيْنا إِلَيْكَ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ

٢- Ibid, Verse ١١١ لَقَدْ كانَ فِی قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِی الأَلْبَابِ

by virtue of those of their affairs that have become known to me, it is as though I have lived with them from the first to the last. I have therefore been able to discern the impure from the clean and the benefit from the harm. I have selected for you the choicest of those matters and collected for you their good points while keeping away ".from you the useless ones

Years ago, I had written a book on ethics (for the treatment of vices), by the name of Ihyaul Qulub. Ever since, I had been reflecting over the idea of compiling a book on moral stories. It so happened that, divinely, an opportunity came up before me and with it the motivation for undertaking this assignment. In spite of the lack of necessary books, I contented myself with those that were available and commenced .the compilation of this book, recording four to five stories for every topic

I have certainly not come across any book which has been compiled in this fashion. Books like Namunah-e-Ma'arif-e-Islam and Pand-e-Tarikh have been present for around ٣٠ years and I have made use of them too (in the course of this collection), but in those books, Qur'anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies have all been accumulated together; whereas, I have sought to satisfy myself by mentioning only the stories, while abstaining from presenting considerations relating to Qur'anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies, which would not only have

increased the size of the book but would also have made it difficult to understand for many of the readers. This collection caters for the general public, young and old alike, .who are acquainted with basic reading and writing

As far as possible, I have endeavoured to omit scientific issues and those aspects, pertaining to traditions, whose comprehension would be demanding and exacting for .the general masses

Although some of the stories may not possibly possess any aspect of reality and actuality, what I have focused on is the admonition and 'taking-a-lesson' aspect contained in them, which hopefully, the honourable readers would perceive and .comprehend

As far as the issue of associating a story to a particular topic is concerned, I do not claim that the stories allude to just one topic or that particular one which has been specified here; rather, there are stories which can be associated with several other .topics too, in addition to the topic under which it has been mentioned here

When narrating a text or presenting a translation, I have not restricted myself to the literal meaning but, for a better comprehension, have resorted to paraphrasing, .allusion and conceptual explanation too

To avoid interference of topics with one another and prolongation of discussion, I have refrained from bringing forth topics that are related to those already presented. For example, Ithar (altruism) has been presented as one of the topics but Infaq .(spending in the path of Allah) has been excluded

To prevent the reader from

experiencing exhaustion and boredom, and for the sake of variety, I have desisted from presenting stories of a monotonous kind, like those of philosophers and poets, but have strived to make the collection varied. In this way, the readers will, hopefully, .derive a greater pleasure from the narratives

In view of the fact that trustworthiness ought to be adhered to, I have referred every narrative presented here, to the book from which it has been extracted, also mentioning the volume and page. It is only with the objective of achieving a greater fluency of work that I have endeavoured to correct, polish or alter some of the words .or sentences of the original text

It is hoped that the readers, after going through the stories and narratives, reflect upon and take lessons from them so that they are able to create within themselves, a new impetus towards perfection of morals; and Allah Willing, those who are endowed with laudable morals, should relate them to others, for rectification and remedy of the .weaker souls

Sayyid Ali Akbar Sadaqat

:(And our final prayer (is

.All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds

[Mordad, ١٣٧٨ [July ١٩٩٩

(Piety (Taqwa .٢١

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى وَ اتَّقُوْنِ يَـا أُولِى الأَلْبَابِ

(But the best of provisions is right conduct. So fear Me, O' ye that are wise."(١"

:Imam 'Ali (as) said

لَا يُقَلَّلُ عَمَلٌ مَعَ تَقْوىً.

“No deed, if accompanied by piety, is trivial.”(۲)

Short Expalantion

Special taqwa is acquired by refraining from prohibited and dubious things, whereas

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۱- Noble Qur’an, Suratul Baqarah (۲), Verse ۱۹۷

۲- Al-Kafi , Volume ۲, Page ۶۱

.general taqwa is acquired out of fear of punishment and the fire of Hell

Taqwa is similar to the water of a river that flows by the trees growing along its banks, each tree benefiting from it in the measure of its tenderness, covetousness and essence. Although people benefit from piety according to their knowledge, .perception and level of faith, their levels of piety differ in deeds and sincerity

In reality, piety is absolute obedience without any transgression, and (it is) knowledge without any ignorance. It becomes the cause for the acceptance of one's (good) deeds and makes one, who comes to possess it, distinguished and pre-eminent.(١)

The Incorrect Piety (١

Once, during the era of the Noble Prophet (S), three ladies approached him to .complain about their husbands

".The first lady complained: "My husband has stopped eating meat

.My husband has abandoned the use of perfume," the second one protested"

.The third lady complained that her husband did not have intimate relations with her

By behaving in this manner, the husbands had desired to practice piety and) .(abstinence

This disturbed the Noble Prophet (S) so much that as he came out of his house, he did .not even put on his cloak properly and thus, it dragged along the ground behind him

Climbing the pulpit before a gathering of the people, he praised Allah, and said: "Why is it that some of my companions do not eat meat, they do not apply perfume and ?they do not have intimate relations with their wives

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١- Tadhkeratul Haqaiq, Page ٧٩

O’ Muslims! Do know that I too eat meat, make use of perfume and am intimate with my wives. This is my tradition and one who distances himself from my tradition is not ”.from me

In this manner, the Noble Prophet (S) destroyed the foundations of incorrect piety and (condemned its advocates.(۱

Abu Dharr (۲

Abu Dharr said: “My provisions and savings during the time of the Noble Prophet (S) had always been three kilograms of dates. As long as I live, I shall never seek to ”.possess more than this quantity

Ata says: I noticed Abu Dharr offering prayers in an old garment. “O’ Abu Dharr! Don’t‘ .you have a better garment?” I asked him

.If I had one, you would have seen me in it,” he replied“

.But for a period, I had seen you with two outfits,” I said“

”.I gave the other one to my nephew, who was in greater need than me“

.By Allah! You are needy yourself,” I exclaimed“

He raised his head towards the sky and implored, “Indeed! O’ Lord! I am in need of ”.Your forgiveness

He then turned to me and continued, “It appears that you have come to regard this world as something very important and significant. In addition to this garment that you presently see on me, I have one more garment which is exclusive for the mosque, some goats which provide me with milk, some food, a wooden case in which I carry my belongings and a wife

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Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani, Volume ۲, Page ۷۴; Al-Kafi, Volume ۵, Page ۴۹۶ -۱

who relieves me from the troubles of cooking; what bounty could be greater than ”?what I possess

Some people suggested to Abu Dharr, “Do you not desire to purchase properties for ”?yourself as the others have done for themselves

What need do I have to become an aristocrat or a nobleman?” he replied. “A drink of“ milk and water every day and a (small) amount of wheat in a week are quite sufficient (for me!”(١

A Drunkard is not to be Trusted (٣

Isma`il, the eldest son of Imam Sadiq (as), had some money in his possession. When he learned that a person from the tribe of Quraish who was living in Madinah, was about to set out for Yemen, he decided to hand him some money so that he could .purchase for him some merchandise for trade

When Isma`il consulted his father, Imam Sadiq (as) about the issue, the Imam (as) ”?inquired: “Does the man consume intoxicants

.People say so, but how do we know they speak the truth?” replied Isma`il“

”.The Imam (as) advised him, “It is not in your interest to give him the money

But Isma`il still gave his money to the person, who proceeded on his trip and in the .course of it, embezzled the funds

During the season of Hajj, both Imam Sadiq (as) and Isma`il went on pilgrimage. Isma`il was in the process of performing the Tawaf of the Ka'bah when the Imam .(as) noticed that he was continually beseeching Allah to redeem his losses

,Manoeuvring himself through the crowd

Paighambar Wa Yaran, Volume ١, Page ۴٧; A'yan al-Shi'a, Page ٣٢٩ – ٣۴٧ -١

the Imam (as) reached his son and placing his hand upon his shoulder, squeezed it lightly and said: "My Son! Do not seek anything from Allah needlessly, for you have no right upon Him. You should not have trusted the person in the first place. It is not upon others to rectify one's own wrongdoing."

"The people used to say that he consumed intoxicants but I had not seen him consume it!" said Isma`il.

The Imam (as) advised him further: "Consider the talks of the believers to be correct and do not trust a drunkard; be wary of giving money to those who are foolish and weak of understanding just as has been stated in the Qur'an(١). Who could be more foolish than a drunkard? Suggestions and intermediation of a drunkard in issues related to marriage should not be accepted nor should one place trust in his possession for he is bound to misappropriate it. A person who relies on a drunkard has no right whatsoever upon Allah that he may seek from Him compensation for damages suffered by him."(٢)

۴) Sheikh Murtadha Ansari

The late Sheikh Murtadha Ansari, in the company of his brother, travelled from Kashan to Mashhad and then arrived in Tehran where he eventually settled down in Madershah madrasah in which he shared a room with one of the students.

One day, the Sheikh gave the student some money so that he could buy some bread for both of them. When the student returned, the Sheikh noticed

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١- Noble Qur'an, Suratul Nisa (٥), Verse ٥ (لَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهاَءَ اَموَالَكُمُ الَّتی جَعَلَ اللهُ لَکُم قِیاماً)

٢- Ba Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Konim, Page ٣٥; Biharul Anwar, Volume ۴, Page ٢۶٧

that he had brought some sweetmeat too, which he had placed on top of the bread. Turning to the student, he said: “From where did you get the money to purchase the ”?sweetmeat

.I borrowed it,” replied the student“

The Sheikh took only that portion of the bread that had no sweetmeat on it, saying: “I shall not eat the sweetmeat for I am not sure I may live long enough to repay the ”!debt

Years later, when that student came to Najaf, he went to the Sheikh and asked: “Now that you are at the head of the Hawza ‘Ilmiyyah and the Marja’ of the entire Shi’a ”?world, tell me, what did you do that Allah granted you this great success

It is because I did not have the courage to eat even that portion of the bread which“ lay beneath the sweetmeat, but you had the audacity to eat the bread as well as the (sweetmeat!” replied the Sheikh.(١

The Objection of ‘Aqil (۵

Once, after becoming the caliph, Imam ‘Ali (as) ascended the pulpit, praised Allah and said to the assembly: “By Allah, as long as I have in my possession (even) one branch of a date-palm, I shall not extend my hand towards your wealth. I am depriving ”.myself of this wealth and am giving it to you

At this point ‘Aqil, the brother of Imam (as), stood up. “By Allah! You have placed me on .par with that black person from Madinah,” he said

Sit down! There is none except you, who“

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, Volume ۴, Page ۱۵۱; Zindagi Wa Shakhsiyyat-e-Sheikh - ۱ Ansari, Page ۷۰

could have spoken out in this gathering. You do not possess any kind of superiority over that black person, save for precedence in Islam, piety and reward, and these are issues which bring about superiority in the Hereafter," Imam 'Ali (as) cautioned him.(1)

22. Trust In Allah

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

فَإِذاَ عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلى اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِـبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِيْنَ

"So when you have decided, then place your trust in Allah; surely Allah loves those who trust."(2)

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

أَلتَّوَكُّلُ عَلى اللّٰهِ نَجاَةٌ مِنْ كُلِّ سُوْءٍ.

"Placing one's trust in Allah is the means of deliverance from every evil."(3)

Short Expalantion

Tawakkul (placing one's trust in Allah) is a jar that has been sealed with Allah's seal, and only that person who does not rely on Allah and place his trust in Him, shall break open the seal of the jar and consume its contents.

The lowest grade of tawakkul is when a person does not strive to act upon his own principles before the right time, and does not endeavour to acquire more than what has been ordained for him. The essence of tawakkul is entrusting one's affairs to Allah, and if a person is heedless towards the actual 'cause', i.e. Allah, he shall not achieve the reality of tawakkul.

Tawakkul can never be realized by mere words and claims, rather, it is an internal and esoteric issue, which finds its roots in faith and belief, and it is by abandoning all hopes and aspirations that a person can arrive at the reality of tawakkul.(4)

The Trader who Placed his Trust in Allah (۱

During the

p: ۱۳

Namunah-e-Ma'arif, Volume ۳, Page ۱۷۱; Al-Wafi, Volume ۳, Page ۶۰ -۱

Noble Qur'an, Surat Ale 'Imran (۳), Verse ۱۵۹ -۲

Biharul Anwar, Volume ۷۸, Page ۷۹ -۳

Tadhkerah al-Haqaiq, Page ۷۲ -۴

time of the Noble Prophet (S) there lived a trader who, in all affairs, always placed his trust in Allah. He used to travel from Syria to Madinah for trade and during one of his .trips, he was confronted by a bandit who drew his sword and intended to kill him

If it is my wealth that you desire, come and take it and leave me alone," pleaded the" .trader

Killing you is a must, for if I let you go free, you will identify me to the authorities,"" .said the bandit

In that case give me respite till I have offered a two rak'at prayer," requested the" .trader

The bandit agreed and the trader engaged himself in prayers. Having completed the prayers, he raised his hands and beseeched: 'O' Lord! I have heard from Your Prophet that whoever places his trust in You shall remain protected. I have no helper in this '.desert and Your grace is my only hope

Having placed all his trust in Allah, he had hardly completed his supplication when a rider on a white horse loomed in the distance. When he came close, the rider confronted the bandit and killed him with one stroke of his sword. Then, turning to the trader, he said: "O' You, who places your trust in Allah! I have killed the enemy of Allah ".and He has delivered you from him

.Who are you that you have come to my assistance in this desert?" the trader asked"

I am your tawakkul. Allah brought me out in the form of an Angel and I was in the" heavens when Jibra`il called out to me and said: "Hasten to the assistance of your master and exterminate his enemy", and here I have come and eliminated your .enemy." Having said thus, he disappeared out of sight

The trader fell down in prostration of thanksgiving to Allah and acquired a stronger conviction with respect to the instructions of the Noble Prophet (S) regarding tawakkul. On arrival in Madinah, he approached the Noble Prophet (S) and narrated .what had transpired

Indeed! Tawakkul raises a person to the pinnacle of success and the rank of a person " who possesses it, is equivalent to the ranks of the Prophets, the friends of Allah, the righteous ones and the martyrs," said the Prophet (S).(۱)

The Noble Prophet and Trust in Allah (۲

When Abu Sufiyan, the chief of the polytheists of Makkah, saw the ten thousand strong army of Islam (during the conquest of Makkah), he was filled with awe and astonishment. As he walked beside the battalions of the Noble Prophet (S), he murmured: "I wish I knew why Muhammad became victorious over me. How did he manage to gather for himself such a powerful army despite being alone and without "?support in Makkah

The Noble Prophet (S) overheard him. "We became victorious over you by Allah's .assistance!" he said, placing his hand upon Abu Sufiyan's shoulder

In the battle of Hunain, when the enemy suddenly and unsuspectingly attacked

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(Khazinatul Jawahir, Page ۶۷۹; Majalis al-Muttaqin (of Shahid-e-Thalith -۱

the forces of Islam, chaos reigned supreme within the Muslim ranks. When the Noble Prophet (S) watched this state of the Muslim army, he sought Allah's help by placing his trust in Him, and supplicated: 'O' Lord! All praise and thanks only belong to You. I place my complaint (regarding the state of affairs) before You and it is only You from '.whom help and assistance ought to be sought

At that moment, Jibra`il descended from the heavens and said to him: "O' Prophet of Allah! You have recited a supplication which Musa (as) had recited when the sea had (split for him and he was granted deliverance from the evils of Fir'awn."(١

The Illness of Prophet Musa (٣

Once, Prophet Musa (as) became ill. The Bani Israel came to him and realizing what his illness was, advised him: "If you consume such and such medicine you will recover ".from your sickness

I shall not seek any cure but will instead wait till Allah cures me without the help of" any medicine," said Musa (as) to them. His illness became prolonged whereupon Allah revealed to him: "By My Majesty and Glory! I shall never cure you till you have ".consumed the medicine which they had recommended to you

Musa (as) asked the Bani Israel to treat him with the medicine that they had previously suggested. They treated him and shortly after that, Musa (as) regained his health. However, this incident left Musa (as) with a feeling of complaint and dejection

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Dars-hai Az Zindagi-e-Payambar-e-Islam, Page ٢١۶; Biharul Anwar, Volume ٢١, - ١ Page ١۵٠

but Allah revealed to him: "You desired to annul My Wisdom by means of your trust in Me! Is there one, other than Me, who has placed the medicinal and beneficial effects (in plants and various things?" (۱)

Hammad Ibn Habib (۴

Hammad Ibn Habib Kufi narrates: "One year, I had set out for Hajj accompanied by some people. Just as we passed by a place called Zubalah, a dreadful wind with black dust began to blow. Its intensity was so great and severe that everyone in the group were left scattered. I found myself alone and lost in a place with no water or trees. It was not long before night fell. Staring into the distance, my eyes perceived the silhouette of a single tree and I began trudging towards it. As I approached the tree, I witnessed that a youth, dressed in white apparel and scented with musk, also came .up to the tree

.This person must be one of the auliya of Allah!' I thought'

I concealed myself fearing that if I came forward, he would move away to another :place. The youth readied himself for his prayers, recited

يَا مَنْ حَاذَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ مَلَكُوْتاً

.and then started his prayers

I noticed that there was a spring of water nearby. I performed my ablution and stood behind the youth for my prayers. I observed that in the course of his prayers, when the youth reached the verses that narrated Divine chastisement and punishment, he would repeat

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Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۳, Page ۲۲۸; 'Ilm-e-Akhlaq-e-Islami, Volume ۲, Page ۲۹۰ -۱

them with wailing, weeping and lamentation. After the prayers, the youth began to :walk away from his place, all the while supplicating

يَا مَنْ قَصَدَهُ الضَّالُّونَ

Fearing that I might lose him, I rushed toward him and pleaded: "I place you under the oath of He Who has taken away exhaustion from you and instilled within you the ecstasy of this solitude! Have pity upon me for I have lost my way and I (also) desire ".to be adorned with your traits and attributes

If you had truly placed your trust in Allah, you would never have lost your way. Now" .follow me," replied the youth

Saying this, he went to one side of the tree and, taking hold of my hand, brought me to a place by means of tayy al-ardh(١). It became apparent to me that morning had .dawned

.Good news for you, for this place is Makkah," said the youth"

I realized that I could hear the voices of the pilgrims who had come there to perform the Hajj. I turned to the youth and asked: "I place you under the oath of He, upon "?Whom you have pinned your hopes for the Day of Judgment! Tell me, who are you

Since you have placed me under oath, I shall inform you of my identity. I am 'Ali Ibn" (Husain (Zainul 'Abidin)," the youth answered.'"(٢

Relying upon the Butler (٥

Jibra`il came to Prophet Yusuf (as) while he was in prison and asked him: "O' Yusuf! Who made

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١ - Literally: Folding up of the earth. Covering a great distance in a fraction of a (.moment, miraculously. (Tr

٢ - Pand-e-Tarikh, Volume ٥, Page ١٨٢; Biharul Anwar, Volume ١١, Page ٢۴

you the most beautiful of all men?”

Yusuf replied, “Allah.”

Jibra`il questioned again, “Who made you the most beloved of all children in the eyes of your father?”

“My Allah,” said Yusuf.

“Who directed the caravan towards the well (into which you were thrown)?”

“My Lord,” replied Yusuf.

“Who protected you from the stone which the people of the caravan had hurled into the well?”

“Allah.”

“Who delivered you from the well?”

“My Allah.”

“Who protected you from the deceit of the ladies?”

“My Lord.”

Jibra`il finally concluded, “Allah says: What made you seek your need from someone other than Me? For this act, you shall stay in prison for seven years (for the offense of placing your trust in the king’s barman and asking him to seek your freedom from the king).”

According to another tradition, Allah revealed to him: “O’ Yusuf! Who was it who showed you that dream?”

Yusuf replied, “It was You, O’ My Lord!”

“Who protected you from the guiles of the wife of the King of Egypt?” asked Allah.

"!It was You, O' My Lord"

Allah declared, "(Then) why did you seek help from someone else and not from Me? Had you placed your trust in Me, I would have liberated you from your imprisonment, but now that you have placed your trust in someone else, you must stay in prison for ".seven years

After this) Yusuf wept so much in prison that his inmates became frustrated with him) (and it was decided that he would only weep on alternate days. (١)

Submission .٢٣

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ أُمِرْنَا

p: ١٩

Namunah-e-Ma'arif, Volume ٣, Page ٢٨٠; Layaliul Akhbar, Page ٩٢ -١

لِنُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَـمِينَ

"And we are commanded that we should submit to the Lord of the worlds."(١)

Imam Baqir (as) said:

أَحَقُّ خَلْقِ اللّٰهِ أَنْ يُسْلِمَ لِمَا قَضَى اللّٰهُ.

"The most worthy of Allah's servants is one who submits before divine decree."(٢)

Short Expalantion

The attribute of taslim(٣) holds a rank higher than those of ridha(٤) and tawakkul(٥). This is because a person who possesses this attribute abandons his own quest for seeking solutions to the problems that plague him and instead, dissociates himself from his inner attachments to such an extent that he hands himself over to Allah completely.

In the attribute of Rid'a, the actions are generally consistent with human inclination and temperament, while in tawakkul, people take Allah as their agent, but such is not the case in the attribute of tasleem. The chosen ones of Allah are afflicted with various kinds of difficulties such as an ill-tempered spouse, poverty, disease, harassment by the people, and so on; but having submitted themselves totally, they neither voice any protest nor do they experience any sort of unhappiness over these afflictions.

1) The Imam's Reply

It has been narrated that sometimes, Imam Sadiq (as) entertained his guests with sweetmeat and porridge, whereas at other times, he presented them with olives and plain bread.

A person once said to him: "If you manage your affairs with prudence (and foresight), you will always be consistent and will thus be able to entertain your guests in the same manner at all times."

The management of our affairs lies in Allah's hands (and we are in"

Noble Qur'an, Suratul An'am (۶), Verse ٧١ -١

Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ٣, Page ٢٠۴ -٢

(.Submission to the will of Allah. (Tr -٣

(.Satisfaction and pleasure over divine decree. (Tr -۴

(.Complete reliance upon Allah. (Tr -۵

total submission to His Will). Whenever He grants us (an increased livelihood), we cater for our guests and ourselves liberally but whenever He restrains our livelihood, (we too adjust our lives accordingly," replied the Imam (as).(۱)

Mu'adh Ibn Jabal (۲

Mu'adh embraced Islam at the age of eighteen and participated in the battles of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq and some others. The Noble Prophet (S) established the bond of .brotherhood between him and 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud

Mu'adh was compassionate by nature and possessed a pleasant personality. The Noble Prophet (S) sent him to Yemen as its governor and showered him with numerous advices, one of them being: "Do not be too strict with the people; behave ".with them in such a manner that they are attracted to your speech and religion

During the Caliphate of the second Caliph, a battle ensued between the Muslims and the Romans and Mu'adh participated in it too. In the year ۱۸ ah, in 'Amwas, Syria, an epidemic of plague began to spread. Abu 'Ubaidah, the commander of the Muslim army, was afflicted with the disease and when he realized that his death was inevitable, he appointed Mu'adh as his successor. The soldiers requested Mu'adh to .pray for an end to the calamity but he declined to do so

This is not a calamity. Instead, it is a prayer of your Prophet (S); death of the pious" and righteous ones, and martyrdom, which Allah grants to only a few from amongst .you," he said

!He then supplicated: "O' Lord

Shanidani-ha-e-Tarikh, Page ۳۲; Mahajjatul Baid'a, Volume ۳, Page ۴۳ -۱

".(Grant the household of Mu'adh their complete share of this Mercy (plague

Shortly afterwards, members of his household were afflicted with the disease and succumbed to it. When he too sensed its effects in his finger, he placed the finger in his mouth and biting it, said, "O' Lord! This is small and trivial; make it blessed (for ".(me

He eventually died of this plague (in the year ۱۸ ah) at the age of ۳۸ and was buried (near Jordan.(۱

Learn Submission from the Pigeons (۳

During the time of one of the prophets, there lived a lady who had a son who was in his youth and whom she loved dearly. As divine decree would have it, the son died leaving the mother greatly aggrieved and immensely disturbed. She was in such a .state that her relatives approached the prophet of the time and sought his help

When he came to the mother, the prophet found her in a state of sorrow and agitation and was weeping. His eyes then fell upon a pigeon-nest nearby. He turned to the lady "?and asked: "O' Lady! Is this a pigeon-nest

.The lady replied that it was

.Do the pigeons give birth to their young ones?" asked the prophet"

".Yes"

"?Do all the young ones grow up to be able to fly"

.No, we kill some of them for their flesh," said the lady"

"?The prophet continued, "And despite this, these pigeons do not abandon their nest

No, they do not move away to another place," replied"

Paighambar Wa Yaran, Pages ۲۶۴–۲۵۹; Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd, Volume ۳, Pages ۱۲۲-۱۲۴ -۱

.the lady

The prophet then advised, “O’ Lady! Be apprehensive lest you be worse off than these pigeons in the eyes of your Lord. These pigeons, despite the fact that you kill and eat their young ones in front of their eyes, do not turn away from you. Whereas you, as a result of losing just one son, have directed your anger towards Allah, turned away from Him, exhibited all this agitation, and uttered things that are inappropriate.”

Hearing these words, her tears ceased and she never displayed impatience and discontent thenceforth.(١)

Sa’sah (۴

Ahnaf Ibn Qais narrates: “Once, I complained to my paternal uncle Sa’sah, of stomach ache. Instead of sympathising with me, he rebuked me severely by saying: “O’ Nephew! Whenever you experience any discomfort and you complain about it to another being similar to yourself, there can exist only two possibilities on the issue: the person to whom you have narrated your problem is either your friend, in which case, quite obviously, he too would be concerned for you; or he is your enemy, in which case he would be delighted over your disturbed state.

Do not manifest your problem to someone who is like you and does not possess the power to free you from it; instead seek shelter in, and present the problem to Him, Who has afflicted you with it, for it is He, Who can rid you of it.

O’ Nephew! It has been forty years since one of my eyes

١- Namunah-e-Ma’arif, Volume ٢, Page ٧۶١

lost its vision but I have not revealed this to anyone - not even my wife knows that I am blind in one eye!"(1)

5) Submission before a Ruling

The date-plantation of Zubair Ibn 'Awwam (a cousin of the Noble Prophet (S)) lay adjacent to that of one of the Ansar (the Helpers). Once, there arose a dispute between them in respect of the irrigation of their lands.

In order to resolve the dispute they approached the Noble Prophet (S) and presented the problem to him. Taking into account the fact that the plantation of Zubair lay near the upper part of the land where the water came from, while that of the other person was near the lower section (and it was the customary practice that the upper part would be watered before the lower one), the Noble Prophet (S) ruled that it should be Zubair, who should water his plantation first, followed by the person from the Ansar.

Despite the totally just nature of the ruling, the Ansar was displeased and protested to the Noble Prophet (S) saying: "You have ruled in Zubair's favour as he happens to be your cousin."

The Noble Prophet (S) was so greatly upset at this antagonistic staement that the colour of his face changed. At this juncture, the following verse was revealed: "But no! By your Lord! They do not believe (in reality) until they make you a judge of that which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then do not find any straitness in

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1- Pand-e-Tarikh, Volume 5, Page 188; Al-Kuna Wa al-Alqab, Volume 2, Page 13

(their hearts as to what you have decided and submit with entire submission."(1)

This verse indicates that nobody can express dissatisfaction with the ruling of the leader of an Islamic government of the Noble Prophet (S) and seek to follow his own inclinations. One should submit totally to the verdict given.(2)

24. Contemplation

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

اَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا فِى أَنْفُسِهِمْ مَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ السَّمٰواتِ وَ الأَرْضَ وَ ما بَيْنَهُماَ إِلاَّ بِالْحَقِّ وَ أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى

"Do they not reflect within themselves: Allah did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them two but with truth, and (for) an appointed term?" (3)

Imam 'Ali (as) said:

أَلتَّفَكُّرُ يَدْعُو إِلــى الْبِرِّ وَ الْعَمَلِ بِهِ.

"Contemplation invites (man) towards good (deed) and its performance." (4)

Short Expalantion

Reflecting over one's own state and that of the other people leads to the manifestation of the good, expiation of sins and illumination of the heart. It draws a person's attention towards his Hereafter and brings about an increase in his or her (good) deeds.

Contemplation is a quality and an act of worship, the like of which there is none - just as the Noble Prophet (S) has said: "An hour of contemplation is superior to an entire year's worship." Only he, upon whose heart Allah has cast His glance and illuminated it with the light of His cognizance, can reach the station of contemplation, whereupon he then begins to perceive the world with a vision of comprehension and understanding, and never becomes heedless of Allah.(5)

Rabi'ah (۱

Rabi'ah

p: ۲۵

۱- Noble Qur'an, Suratul Nisa (۴), Verse ۶۵ (و يُسَلِّمُوا تَسلِيمًا)

۲- Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, Volume ۹, Page ۱۰۲; Majma'ul Bayan, Volume ۳, Page ۶۹

۳- Noble Qur'an, Suratul Rum (۳۰), Verse ۸

۴- Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۱, Page ۱۶۶

۵- Tadhkerah al-Haqaiq, Page ۲۹

Ibn Ka’b reports: “Once, the Noble Prophet (S) said to me: “O’ Rabi’ah! You have been serving me for seven years and therefore, will you not ask for something from me in ”?order that I grant it to you

O’ Prophet of Allah! Grant me some time in order that I may reflect over the matter,”“ I requested. The next day, when I had arrived in his presence, the Prophet (S) said: “O’ ”.Rabi’ah! Speak out your wish

.Pray to Allah that He makes me enter Paradise along with you!” I said“

”?Hearing this request, he inquired, “Who is it that has taught you to seek this from me

No one has taught it to me. I considered that if I sought great wealth, it would“ eventually get exhausted; if I sought a long life and numerous children, the ultimate eventuality would be death; hence, as a result of this contemplation, I eventually .opted for this request,” I replied

The Noble Prophet (S) lowered his head for a few moments as he deliberated, after which, raising his head, he said: “I shall seek your wish from Allah, but you must help (me too (in this matter) by prostrating excessively.”(۱

Contemplation before Action (۲

One of the companions of the Noble Prophet (S) said to him: “I always tend to suffer losses in my business transactions. The guile and deception of the sellers or the ”.purchasers act like magic and leave me cheated

The Noble Prophet (S) advised: “In every transaction in which you fear that

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(Khazinatul Jawahir, Page ۳۴۵; Al-Da’wat (By Rawandi -۱

you might be deceived, demand from the person with whom you are doing business with the right to annul the transaction within a period of three days. This is for the reason that should you happen to suffer losses, you would be able to take back your .money. In addition, be patient and forbearing in the course of the transaction

Do know that contemplation and patience are from Allah, while hastiness and“ impetuosity are from Shaitan. You can learn this lesson from a dog, for when you throw a piece of bread to a dog, it does not immediately begin to eat it but first smells it and after finding it to be appropriate, begins eating it; similarly, you should smell every matter that comes up before you (i.e. reflect and ponder over the pros and cons of it and do not embark upon it without the preliminaries). You, with your intellect and (wisdom, are no less than a dog; thus, contemplate and reflect before every action.”(۱

Types of Contemplation (۳

Miqdad, one of the loyal companions of ‘Ali (as), says: “I went to Abu Hurairah who said that he had heard the Noble Prophet (S) say: ‘Contemplating for an hour is better ’.than the worship of one year

I went to Ibn ‘Abbas and heard him say that the Noble Prophet (S) said: ’.‘Contemplation for one hour is superior to seven years of worship

I went to another companion and heard him narrate that the Noble Prophet (S) said: ‘An hour of contemplation

p: ۲۷

Riwayat-ha Wa Hikayat-ha, Page ۱۹۵; Dastan-ha-e-Mathnawi, Volume ۲, Page ۱۲۵ -۱

’.is better than seventy years of worship

I was astonished to hear each of them narrating differently from the other and so, I approached the Noble Prophet (S) and informed him of the three different versions. He said: “All three of them speak the truth.” Then, in order to prove his point, he summoned the three men. All of us gathered in the presence of the Noble Prophet (S).

”?The Noble Prophet (S) asked Abu Hurairah: “How do you contemplate

As stated by Allah in the Qur’an: ‘(Men of understanding) reflect on the creation of the“ heavens and the earth.’(۱). I too reflect upon the wonders of the heavens and the .earth,” he replied

The Noble Prophet (S) remarked, “One hour of your contemplation is better than one ”.year of worship

”?Then turning to Ibn ‘Abbas, he asked, “How do you contemplate

.I reflect upon death and the horrors of the Day of Judgment,” replied Ibn ‘Abbas“

The Noble Prophet (S) said, “One hour of your contemplation is better than seven years of worship.” Then, he asked the other companion, “In what manner do you ”?contemplate

The companion answered, “I reflect upon the fire of Hell and its dreadfulness and ”.severity

One hour of your contemplation is better than seventy years of worship,” the Noble“ .Prophet (S) stated

In this way the issue was solved and it became clear that the rewards for (contemplation depended upon the intention that accompanied it.(۲

Thoughts of Leadership (۴

Sa’di narrates: “One of my friends who was disturbed and distressed

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Noble Qur'an, Surat Ale 'Imran (۳), Verse ۱۹۱ -۱

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, Volume ۵, Page ۸۷; Tafsir Ruhul Bayan, Volume ۸, Page ۴۴۰ -۲

due to his meagre livelihood, complained to me about his low income and a large ".family

In order to safeguard my reputation, I intend to shift to another city so that no one" becomes aware of the abject state of my affairs," he said. "You are aware that I know accounting and can maintain accounts; I have approached you so that you use your rank and position to get me a job in the government so that I might lead my remaining "!life with peace of mind and will be grateful to you for your efforts

I said to him, "Handling the accounts of the king entails two aspects; on the one hand it carries hope while on the other hand it is also work which has to be feared. Do not ".place yourself in an ominous situation for the hope which the work possesses

In view of my condition, your advice appears to be inappropriate; in addition, you" .have not responded correctly to my request," said the friend

You surely possess piety, knowledge and trustworthiness but (do realize that)" envious and fault-finding individuals lie in wait for you. It is in your own interest that you lead your life with contentment and abandon the idea of a high rank and post," I .explained

My friend was upset when he heard this and said, "What kind of reasoning and deliberation is this? It is in times of need that friends should step forward for help, for in good times even enemies

".pretend to be one's friend

Sensing his embarrassment over my advice, I took him to the minister of treasury who was known to me. I narrated to him my friend's plight and the minister assigned .him the responsibility of a petty task

As time passed, the officials found him to be vigilant and pleasant-mannered and so promoted him. After a long time, I embarked on a journey to Makkah with some of my friends. On the way back, not far from my city, I came across my friend who seemed .to be in a state of distress. He came towards me looking depressed

.Why are you in such a state?" I asked him"

Just as you had predicted, a group of people became envious of me and accused me" of treason," he responded. "The king, without any investigation, threw me into prison and subjected me to torture and punishment. I remained in prison till the news of the return of the pilgrims reached the city, whereupon I was set free. The king even went ".to the extent of confiscating the inheritance which I had received from my father

Sa'di continues: "I said to him, 'I had advised you previously that working for kings is similar to a journey by sea – beneficial, but at the same time, dangerous – you might (either strike treasure or end up in destruction, but you refused to take heed!'"(۱

The Kingdom of Rey or Killing the Imam (۵

Yazid instructed his governor, 'Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad, that if Husain (as) refused to pledge allegiance, he

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Hikayat-ha-e-Gulistan, Page ۶۵ -۱

.(should fight the Imam (as

Prior to the incident of Kerbala, ‘Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad had appointed ‘Umar Ibn Sa`d as governor of the province of Rey, but before he could go there, ‘Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad sent him a letter, which contained the following instructions: ‘Husain (as) has arrived in Iraq. First proceed to Iraq, fight with him, kill him and then proceed towards ’.Rey

Umar Ibn Sa’d approached ‘Ubaidullah and requested: “O’ Amir! Relieve me of this‘ ”!responsibility

I shall relieve you of this responsibility but I shall also relieve you of the governorship“ .of Rey,” ‘Ubaidullah responded

Umar Ibn Sa’d found himself hesitating between fighting the Imam (as) and‘ governing the great kingdom of Rey. He requested ‘Ubaidullah to give him respite for a night so that he could reflect over the matter. ‘Ubaidullah agreed and ‘Umar Ibn Sa’d passed the entire night pondering over the matter till he eventually opted for the kingdom of Rey, which lay before him at that moment, but chose to disregard Hell and .(Paradise, which were in the next life. He decided to fight the Imam (as

The next morning, he went to ‘Ubaidullah and expressed his readiness to accept the responsibility of fighting the Imam (as). ‘Ubaidullah placed a huge army at his disposal .so that he could proceed to Kerbala for the purpose

Imam Husain (as) entered Kerbala on the ۲nd of Muharram while ‘Umar Ibn Sa’d, in his capacity as the supreme commander of his army and with a four thousand

.strong cavalry, arrived there on the ۳rd

He appointed Shimr as the chief of his army and on the ۱۰th of Muharram went to the extent of ordering the killing of Imam Husain (as) and seventy two of his children and (companions just for the purpose of acquiring the kingdom of Rey."(۱)

Humiliation .۲۵

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لاَ يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ

(O you who believe! let not (one) people laugh at (another) people."(۲)"

:The Noble Prophet (S) said

مَنْ حَقَرَ مُؤْمِناً مِسْكِيناً أَوْ غَيْرَ مِسْكِينٍ لَمْ يَزَلِ اللّٰهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ حَاقِراً لَهُ مَاقِتاً.

If a person humiliates a believer, indigent or otherwise, Allah shall always abhor and" (humiliate him." (۳)

Short Expalantion

Factors such as arrogance, malice, envy and the like cause some individuals to view others who are either illiterate or lack strength and whom they have compelled into .performing base and lowly work, with contempt and humiliation

Disparagement in every form is forbidden; moreover, if the humiliated person experiences a feeling of disgrace and injury, this is bound to result in a metaphysical reaction which would reflect badly upon the esteem and personality of the offender. Thus, it is befitting to take regard of the weakest of Allah's creations so that, we too .are encompassed by His grace and compassion

Mufad'd'hal Ibn 'Umar (۱

Once, a letter signed by some of the Shiite elders, was brought to Imam Sadiq (as) by

a few of the signatories themselves. The letter complained of the friendship of Mufad'd'hal Ibn 'Umar, the

p: ۳۲

Muntahal A'mal, Volume ۱, Page ۳۳۳ -۱

Noble Qur'an, Suratul Hujarat (۴۹), Verse ۱۱ -۲

Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۲, Page ۲۱۵ -۳

Imam’s representative in Kufah, with some pigeon-fanciers, who were apparently not .of good character

After reading the letter, the Imam (as) wrote and sent a letter to Mufad’d’hal through .those very individuals who had brought the complaint to him

Perchance, the Imam’s letter reached Mufad’d’hal while some of the signatories of the .letter of complaint were present in his house

Opening the letter in their presence, he read it and then handed it over to them. When the signatories read the letter, they found that it contained some instructions from Imam (as) to Mufad’d’hal, requiring him to arrange a transaction involving a large amount of money. The letter did not make the slightest reference to Mufad’d’hal’s .association with the pigion-fanciers

Since the issue concerned the raising of money, Mufad’d’hal’s guests lowered their heads and said that they needed time to think about it. They asked to be excused .from making any monetary contribution

Mufad’d’hal, the intelligent person that he was, requested them to stay over for food and prevented them from leaving his house. In the meantime, he sent word to the pigeon-fanciers asking them to come to his house. When they had arrived, he read out the Imam’s letter to them in full view of the previous group. Without wasting any time, the pigeon-fanciers left and while the previous group was still engaged in consuming the food, they returned, handed over a large amount of money to .Mufad’d’hal and then took his leave

,At this point

Mufad'd'hal turned to the complainants and said: "Despite the fact that these youths help the religion when the occasion demands and there exists a great possibility that they may turn to the right path, you desire that I should not entertain them and associate with them? Do you think Allah is in need of your prayers and fasts that you have become so haughty over them, but when it comes to money, you seek excuses "?(and refuse to answer the call of the Imam (as

The elders who had viewed Mufad'd'hal's friendship with those youths with contempt, (were left mortified and speechless as they departed from his house.(۱

The Conduct of the Noble Prophet (۲

The Noble Prophet (S) and a few other individuals were having their meal when a person, suffering from smallpox, came to the gathering. His disease was so acute that the boils had become septic. Every person, near whom this diseased person tried to sit, would show his revulsion and loathing by rising up and moving away from him. (Noticing this) the Noble Prophet (S) made the person sit beside himself and exhibited .great kindness towards him

□□□

On another occasion, the Noble Prophet (S), together with a few of his companions, was busy having his food when a leper arrived in the gathering. The people present expressed their abhorrence and detestation over his arrival but the Noble Prophet (S) .asked him to sit next to himself and invited him to eat the food

,A person from the Quraish, who had displayed his aversion

Ba Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Konim, Page ۷۸; Manhajul Maqal of Astarabadi, - ۱ Page ۳۴۳

(was afflicted with the same disease before meeting his death![1])

The Consequence of Holding Someone in Contempt (۳

There lived amongst Bani Isra`il, a person who was so sinful and immoral that they eventually had him expelled from their midst.

Once, while wandering around, he came across a pious worshipper, above whose head flew a pigeon casting its shadow over him (thus protecting him from the sun). He said to himself: "I am a Banished person but this man is a pious individual; if I sit near him it is possible that due to his piety, Allah may show mercy upon me too."

With this in mind, he approached the worshipper and sat down beside him. On seeing the exiled man sit next to him, the worshipper thought to himself: "I am the pious worshipper of this tribe whilst he is a disreputable, Banished and despised sinner; how can he sit down beside me?" Turning his head away from the man, the worshipper ordered him to go away from him.

Just as he had uttered these words, Allah revealed to the prophet of the time: "Go to those two persons and ask them to start their deeds afresh, for I have forgiven all the sins of the immoral person and erased all the good deeds of the worshipper," (for exhibiting self-conceit and holding the other person in contempt).[2]

The Short and Ugly Son (۴

Sa'di narrates: "A king had several sons, one of them being short, thin and ugly, while the others were tall and good-looking.

The king would look at

۱- Ilm-e-Akhlaq-e-Islami, Volume ۱, Page ۴۳۵; Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۱, Page ۳۵۷

۲- Shanidani-ha-e-Tarikh, Page ۳۷۳; Mahajjatul Baid'a, Volume ۶, Page ۲۳۹

the short son with scorn and contempt, thereby causing him humiliation. The son, being intelligent, realized why his father looked down upon him and so said to him: "O' Father! A short but wise person is better than a tall but ignorant one. He who is taller is not necessarily better and superior; a sheep is clean but an elephant, like a carcass, ".always possess a foul smell

The son's words made the king laugh and the elders of the court approved of what he .said, but his brothers were upset

Coincidentally, during those days, it so happened that the enemy forces attacked the kingdom and the first person from the king's army to heroically attack the enemy was the king's short and ugly son. With a display of great courage, he felled a few of the enemy chiefs and then, returning to his father and paying his respects to him, said: "On the day of battle the lean horse comes of use." Despite the fact that a group of his .soldiers had taken flight, the son returned to the battlefield

O' Men! Endeavour hard or else put on the dress of womenfolk," he shouted with" .bitter sarcasm

This sarcasm breathed fresh life into the cavalry who fought with renewed vigour till they eventually overcame the enemy forces and became victorious. The king kissed his son all over the face and named him his successor. From then on, he looked at this son

with great respect and esteem. These events caused his brothers to become so envious of him that they put poison into his food in order to get rid of him. Fortunately, his sister watched what was happening through a small door and sent a warning signal to her brother by shutting the door loudly. The intelligent brother became .suspicious and abstained from eating the food

It is impossible for skilled people to die while the unskilled ones continue to live on“ .and take their place,” he commented

When the king was informed of the incident, he reprimanded the other brothers and (sent each of them to the farthest part of his kingdom.(١

[!Bring forth One Worse than Yourself (۵

Allah revealed to Prophet Musa (as): “The next time you come to converse with Me, ”.bring along someone who is inferior to you

Musa (as) set out in quest of such a person but failed to find one, because every person that he encountered, he did not have the nerve to think that he was superior .to that person

Then, deciding to direct his search amongst the animals, his eyes fell upon a diseased dog. He decided to take it along with him. He tied a rope around the dog’s neck and began pulling it but after a short distance, he regretted his action and set the dog free. .He returned empty-handed to have his conversation with Allah

Why did you not bring someone along with you, in accordance with My order?” came“ .the voice from Allah

Musa

Hikayat-ha-e-Gulistan, Page ۴٣ -١

".as) beseeched, "O' Lord! I failed to find anyone who could be inferior to me)

The reply came from Allah: "By My Might and Glory! Had you brought someone, regarding him to be inferior to yourself, I would have surely erased your name from (the list of Prophets (and relieved you of the rank of Prophethood)!"(۱)

Pride .۲۶

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَالَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالآخِرَهِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مُّـنْكِرَهٌ وَّ هُمْ مُسْـتَكْبِرُونَ

As to those who believe not in the Hereafter, their hearts refuse to know, and they" (are arrogant." (۲)

:The Noble Prophet (S) said

لاَ يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّهَ مَنْ كَانَ فِى قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ حَبَّهٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ مِنْ كِبْرٍ.

One, whose heart contains pride, (even if it is) in the measure of a mustard-seed," (shall not enter Paradise." (۳)

Short Expalantion

A proud and arrogant person regards himself better and superior to others and by assuming vain and wishful thoughts in his mind, adopts the conduct of Shaitan (Satan) who said: "I have been created of fire while Adam has been created of earth, and fire possesses superiority over earth." The first sin to have been committed in the world of .creation was arrogance on the part of Shaitan

Thus, as for it being a vice, there can be no doubt or scepticism. Proud and arrogant individuals look down upon others and anticipate others to greet them and exhibit respect and deference towards them, always nurturing aspects of their superiority and greatness within their minds. The difference between 'Ujb and Takabbur is

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۱- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, Volume ۲, Page ۶۷۶; Layaliul Akhbar, Page ۱۹۷

۲- Noble Qur'an, Suratul Nahl (۱۶) Verse ۲۲

۳- Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۱, Page ۳۴۶

that someone who suffers from 'Ujb is egocentric, whereas one who suffers from takabbur possesses an air of self-superiority with respect to others and it is for this .reason that his (spiritual) sickness is greater than one possessing 'Ujb

Abu Jahl (۱

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, a companion of the Noble Prophet (S), was the first person to' openly recite the Qur'an in front of a gathering. He participated in all the battles of the Noble Prophet (S) but was so short that even when he stood up among people who were sitting, he would not rise above them! It was for this reason that in the battle of Badr, he requested the Noble Prophet (S): "I do not possess the strength to fight in the battle; can you assign me some task by means of which I too can attain the same "?reward as those who fight

Look amongst the dying infidels and if you happen to find anyone of them still alive," .kill him," the Prophet (S) replied

Abdullah narrates: "As I moved in the midst of people who seemed to be dead, I came' to Abu Jahl, the most unyielding enemy of the Noble Prophet (S). He still had some life .left in him

.I thank Allah that He has humiliated you," I said as I sat on his chest"

"?Abu Jahl opened his eyes and grunted, "Woe unto you! Who has been victorious

",Victory is for Allah and His Prophet, and it is for this reason that I shall kill you"

.I replied, placing my foot on his neck

With great arrogance, he cried, “O’ tiny shepherd! You have placed your foot on a very exalted place. Do know that nothing is more painful for me than to be killed by a dwarf ”?like you. Oh! Why did not one of the sons of ‘Abdul Muttalib kill me

.(I severed his head from his body and appeared before the Noble Prophet (S

(Glad tidings to you, O’ Prophet of Allah! This is the head of Abu Jahl.”(۱“

Abu Jahl was more sinful and worse than Fir’awn of the time of Musa (as). When“ Fir’awn was convinced that he would perish, he believed in Allah, whereas when Abu Jahl became certain of his impending doom, he called upon Lat and ‘Uzza to save (him,” the Prophet remarked later.(۲

Walid Ibn Mughairah (۲

Three years after having been appointed as a prophet and with only a handful of people having accepted Islam, it was revealed to the Noble Prophet (S): “Openly proclaim your Prophethood and disregard the ridicule and troubles from the ”.polytheists, for We shall protect you from their evils

One of the opponents was Walid Ibn Mughairah. Once, Jibra`il the divine Archangel, was with the Noble Prophet (S) when Walid happened to pass by. Seeing him, Jibra`il asked the Noble Prophet (S): “This Walid Ibn Mughairah, is he of those who ridicule ”?you

When the Noble Prophet replied in the affirmative, Jibra`il pointed towards Walid’s .foot

Walid continued walking until he reached the

Paighambar Wa Yaran, Volume ۴, Page ۲۰۶; Tabaqat Ibn Sa’d, Volume ۳, Page ۱۰۶ -۱
Safinatul Bihar, Volume ۱, Page ۲۰۰ -۲

place where a person from the tribe of Khuza'ah was engaged in sharpening arrows. Walid stepped on the sharp splinters and chippings lying on the ground, some of which penetrated into the heel of his foot. His heel was badly bruised as blood began to flow. Walid's pride prevented him from bending down and plucking the splinters out of his heel. On reaching his home, he heaved himself into a chair and dropped off to sleep while his daughter slept on the floor beside the chair.

Meanwhile, the blood gushed out so profusely from Walid's wound that it reached the mattress of his daughter who woke up from her sleep. She asked her slave-girl why she had not shut the lid of the water-skin.

Walid explained, "This is not the water from the water-skin. It is the blood of your father."

He then dictated his will and left this world - departing for Hell.(۱)

۳) The Rich near the Poor

A rich person dressed in clean and elegant clothes arrived in the presence of the Noble Prophet (S) and sat down before him. A short while later, a poor person wearing old and tattered clothes, came and sat down near the rich person, who immediately gathered his neat garments from near the poor person and drew it towards himself.

Having observed this, the Noble Prophet (S) remarked to the rich man: "Did you fear that the poor person next to you might make your

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۱- Muntahal A'mal, Volume ۱, Page ۳۶

"?clothes dirty

.No," replied the man"

.(Then why did you behave so?" asked the Noble Prophet (S"

I have a companion (soul) that makes good deeds appear evil to me and vice-versa." O' Prophet of Allah! As a punishment for this reprehensible act of mine, I gift half of ."my wealth to the poor man

"?Turning to the poor person, the Noble Prophet (S) inquired, "Do you accept the offer

.No, O' Prophet of Allah," said the man"

When the rich person wanted to know the reason, the poor man explained: "I fear I (too might come to acquire the pride and self-conceit which has overwhelmed you."(1

Sulaiman Ibn 'Abdul Malik (4

One Friday, Sulaiman Ibn 'Abdul Malik, (one of the Caliphs of Bani Marwan) put on new clothes, applied perfume and ordered that the chest containing the royal turbans be .brought before him

With a mirror in one hand, he kept trying on one turban after another till he was .eventually satisfied with one

With pomp and glory, he set off for the mosque. As he entered the mosque, he ascended the pulpit, looking particularly pleased with his appearance, and kept adjusting his outfit. The sermon he delivered made him feel elated with himself and several times during the sermon, he appeared to be obsessed with his dress and ".thought to himself, "I am a Sultan, young, awe-inspiring and immensely generous

At the end of his sermon, he descended from the pulpit and headed towards his palace. Once inside, he asked a female who seemed

١- Rahnama-e-Sa'adat, Volume ١, Page ١٦١; Al-Kafi, Volume ٢, Chapter The Excellence Of the Poor Muslims

"?to be one of his slave-girls: "What is your opinion about me

I find you to be honourable and joyous; alas! If only it were not for the poem of a" poet!" replied

.the slave-girl

Sulaiman was taken aback by this comment. He insisted on hearing the poem, so she :recited

,You are a good commodity and investment, if only you remain forever'

'.But alas! For man, there is no eternity

As soon as Sulaiman heard it, he burst into tears and continued to weep for the entire day. In the evening he summoned the slave-girl in order to find out what had prompted her to recite that poem, but she swore that till that day she had neither come before him nor had she recited any poem. All the other slave-girls vouched for her testimony. It then struck Sulaiman that the incident had a supernatural dimension .attached to it and the thought filled him with great fear and apprehension

Not long afterwards, he departed from the world with the self-conceit that had come (to seize him.(۱

Khusrow Parvez (۵

Of the kings to whom the Noble Prophet (S) had sent letters inviting them to Islam, one was Khusrow Parvez, the emperor of Iran. The letter was sent to him through .'Abdullah Ibn Hadhakah

On receiving the letter, Khusrow ordered it to be translated. When it was translated, he noticed that the Noble Prophet (S) had written his own name before the emperor's and this proved too hard for him to digest. He tore

.the letter in fury, totally ignored 'Abdullah and refrained from responding to the letter

When the Noble Prophet (S) was informed of this act, he prayed: "O' Lord! You too tear ".apart his kingdom

Khusrow wrote to Badhan, the king of Yemen: "It has reached my ears that a person has claimed Prophethood in Hijaz. Arrange to send two brave and courageous ".persons to him so that they may bring him to me as a captive

Badhan sent two persons, Babwaih and Kharkh'Asrah to Hijaz and they presented .(Badhan's letter to the Noble Prophet (S

".He said to them: "You may rest now for I shall hand over my reply to you tomorrow

The next morning when they arrived before him, the Noble Prophet (S) told them: "Inform Badhan that last night (١٠th of Jumada al-Ula, year ٧ ah), when seven hours of the night had passed, my Lord killed Khusrow Parvez at the hands of his son Sheerwaih, and shortly we shall prevail over his empire. If you accept Islam, you can (continue to rule over your region."(١

Humbleness .٢٧

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ عِبَادُ الرَّحْمٰنِ الَّذِيْنَ يَمْشُوْنَ عَلى الأَرْضِ هَوْناً

And the servants of the Beneficent Allah are they who walk on the earth in" (humbleness."(٢

:The Noble Prophet (S) has said

ماَ تواَضَعَ أَحدٌ لِلّٰهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللّٰهُ.

There is none, who exhibits humility for (the sake of) Allah, except that Allah grants" (him greatness and eminence."(٣

Short Expalantion

Humbleness is the root of all virtues. A humble

۱- Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, Volume ۲, Page ۱۲۶; Raud'atul Safa

۲- Noble Qur'an, Suratul Furqan (۲۵), Verse ۶۳

۳- Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۱, Page ۳۵۹

person is always submissive before the majesty and greatness of Allah, and lays the .foundation of his acts of worship on the platform of this significant virtue

None can comprehend the reality of humility except the Near Ones, from amongst the servants of Allah who have comprehended the Unity of Allah. Submissiveness and fear (with respect to Allah) can only stem from humbleness and it is for this reason that the humble ones possess an appearance which causes them to be recognized by .the angels and divine Gnostics

Their appearance, demeanor, and social and domestic conduct clearly reveals that (they are far away from every kind of pride and arrogance.(۱

The Humbleness of Salman Farsi (۱

Salman had been the governor of one of the cities of Syria for some time. His conduct during the period of his rule remained unchanged from that before his governorship; he would always wear ordinary clothing, travel on foot and even place his household .(things as security and surety (for borrowing money

Once, while moving through the bazar, he saw a man who had purchased some alfalfa and was looking for someone to carry it to his house for him. Salman approached the person, who failed to recognize him, and agreed to carry his load free of charge. The man placed the load of alfalfa on Salman's back. As they were walking, .they came across a person who immediately recognized Salman

.O' Leader! Where are you carrying this burden?" he exclaimed"

Hearing these words, the owner of the load realized

Tadhkeratul Haqaiq, Page ۵۵ -۱

that the person carrying his load was Salman. He fell down on his knees and implored: ”.“Forgive me, for I had failed to recognise you

.Nevertheless, I must carry this load to your house,” said Salman“

When he had done so, he said to the man, “I have fulfilled my promise; now it is for you to promise that henceforth you will never seek the services of anyone for anything. (And know!) By you carrying things which you are able to, it will not reflect negatively upon your manliness.”[1]

Bilal the Abyssinian (۲

Bilal was one of those Muslims who had made great progress spiritually to the extent that he became the muezzin of the Noble Prophet (S). The Noble Prophet (S) would ”.(say to him: “O’ Bilal! Invigorate my soul (by means of your Adhan

The Noble Prophet (S) not only placed him in charge of the public treasury, but also .treated him as if he were his blood brother

When I enter Paradise, I shall hear your footsteps ahead of me, as you walk on its“ .lush-green ground,” he had told Bilal

Consequently, the other Muslims would approach Bilal and congratulate him for the lofty rank that he had come to acquire for himself, but he never allowed their compliments to make him arrogant, nor did he permit the people’s praises to change him. With great humbleness, he would respond to their praises by saying, “I am an Abyssinian and (till yesterday) I had been a slave.”[2]

The Humbleness of the Noble Prophet (۳

,Abu Dharr narrates: “Once

p: ۴۶

Jawame’ al-Hikayat, Page ۱۷۸ -۱

Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani, Volume ۴, Page ۱۷۳; Tabaqat Ibn Sa’d, Volume ۳, Page ۲۳۸ -۲

I observed Salman and Bilal arriving in the presence of the Noble Prophet (S). Salman, out of respect, fell down at the Prophet's feet and kissed them. The Noble Prophet (S) .endeavoured to prevent him from performing this act

Do not perform acts that the non-Arabs perform for their emperors," advised the" Noble Prophet (S). "I am (just) a servant from amongst the servants of Allah - I eat (what they eat and sit where they sit."(1

Muhammad Ibn Muslim (4

Muhammad Ibn Muslim was a wealthy individual from the nobles of Kufah and a companion of Imam Baqir (as) and Imam Sadiq (as). Once, Imam Baqir (as) advised ".him: "O' Muhammad! You must be humble and modest

On his return to Kufah from Madinah, Muhammad Ibn Muslim picked up a pair of scales and a container of dates. He then sat down at the door of Kufah's main mosque and began calling out: "Wh'oever needs dates, should purchase them from me." (He .(acted thus so that not the slightest pride should remain within him

His relatives objected to him by saying that he had disgraced them through this act of .his

My Imam has instructed me to perform a task and I shall not disobey him; I shall not" move from this place till I have sold all the dates that are in this container," said .Muhammad

If it is as you say, then you might as well take up the work of a miller," his relatives" .said to him sarcastically

,To their surprise

Dars-hai Az Zindagi-e-Payambar, Page ۱۶۲; Biharul Anwar, Volume ۷۶, Page ۶۳ -۱

Muhammad agreed. He purchased a hand-mill and busied himself with grinding wheat into flour, the intention being to emancipate himself from vanity and self-importance.(1)

5) 'Isa and the Washing of his Disciples' Feet

'Isa Ibn Maryam (as) once told his disciples that he sought a favour from them.

"What do you want us to do?" they asked.

'Isa (as) moved from his place and washed the feet of all the disciples!

"O' Spirit of Allah! It is more befitting that we should wash your feet!" they exclaimed.

"The person who is the most deserving to serve is one who is a scholar. I have acted thus in order that I may have demonstrated humbleness. You too should develop the quality of humbleness and after I have gone you should behave with the people with humility and modesty just as I have behaved with you,"

'Isa (as) said. "It is by means of humbleness and not arrogance that wisdom flourishes, just as it is on soft ground that plants grow, not on hard mountainous terrain."(2)

28. Repentance

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ أَنِ اسْــتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوْبُوا إِلَيْهِ

"And that you ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him."(3)

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

إِذَا تَابَ الْعَبْدُ تَوْبَةً نَصُوحاً أَحَبَّهُ اللَّهُ فَسَتَرَ عَلَيْهِ.

"If a servant repents sincerely, Allah loves him (and) so conceals his sins."(4)

Short Expalantion

Repentance is the cord of Allah which those repenting must necessarily grasp; they need to clean their interior of their sins and testify against themselves before their .Lord

They should be repentant from the depths of their hearts

p: ۴۸

۱- Riwayat-ha Wa Hikayat-ha, Page ۱۰۳; Dastan-ha-e-Parakandeh, Volume ۳, Page ۱۸

۲- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, Volume ۳, Page ۲۲۳; Al-Wafi, Volume ۱, Page ۴

۳- Noble Qur'an, Surat Hud (۱۱), Verse ۳

۴- Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۳, Page ۶۵

with regards to their past misdeeds, and fearful with regards to the remaining period of their lives. The auliya (friends) of Allah repent for the (inappropriate) thoughts that may have passed through their minds, while the special ones repent for engaging themselves in anything other than Allah, even as the general masses repent for the sins committed by them.

It is vital that, in order to make amends for past (mis)deeds and refrain from committing sins in the future, the person repenting should not look upon any sin as being trivial and insignificant, but should always experience regret over his past lapses, keep his soul away from various kinds of lust and guide it towards struggle (against lust) and worship.(١)

١) The Inventor of a Religion and Repentance

Imam Sadiq (as) related: "In ancient times there lived a man who sought to earn his livelihood and procure great wealth by lawful means but was unsuccessful. He then strived to achieve his objectives by unlawful means but once again failed.

Satan appeared before him and said to him: "You tried to acquire great wealth by lawful as well as unlawful means but were unsuccessful. Do you want me to show you a way by which you would not only become wealthy but you would also attract numerous followers?"

The man expressed his willingness to know how he could get rich.

"Concoct a religion and invite people to follow it," suggested Satan.

The man fabricated a religion and soon, he had a lot of followers through whom he became rich.

One day he

١- Tadhkeratul Haqaiq, Page ٧۵

realized that he had made a mistake by leading numerous people astray so he resolved to inform the people of the falsity of his religion and the error of his ways. But however hard he stressed and emphasized, the people simply refused to accept his .word

Your previous views were correct; have you become sceptical of your own religion“ now?” they asked. When he heard these words, he got some shackles and chained himself. He pledged that he would not unchain himself until Allah accepted his .repentance

Allah revealed to the Prophet of the time to convey the following message to the person: “By My Honour! Even if you weep and supplicate to the extent that every ligament of your body falls apart, I shall never accept your prayers, till you inform those people who have died after having been led astray by you of the reality and (they turn back from your religion.”(۱

The Employee of Bani Umayyah (۲

Ali Ibn Hamzah relates: “I had a young friend who worked as a scribe within the Bani‘ Umayyah administration. Once, he asked me to arrange an appointment for him to meet Imam Sadiq (as). I sought permission from the Imam (as) and he agreed to meet the man. At the appointed time, my friend and I arrived in the Imam’s (as) .presence

My friend greeted the Imam (as), sat down and said: “May I be made your ransom! I had occupied a position in the Ministry of Treasury of the Bani Umayyah

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Pand-e-Tarikh, Volume ۴, Page ۲۵۱; Biharul Anwar, Volume ۲, Page ۲۷۷ -۱

and have managed to acquire great wealth, although I have committed some crimes ”!too

If the Bani Umayyah did not have people like you to collect taxes for them and“ accompany them in their battles, they could not have usurped our rights,” said Imam .(Sadiq (as

.Does there exist a way for my salvation?” pleaded the youth“

”?The Imam (as) asked: “If I tell you, would you act upon it

.The youth replied in the affirmative

From the possessions that remain with you, return those whose owners are known“ to you, and as for those things for which the owners are unknown to you, give them off in charity on behalf of their owners. In exchange for this act, I shall guarantee you .(Paradise!” said Imam (as

Lowering his head, the youth responded after a long deliberation: “May I be made ”.your ransom! I shall do as instructed by you

Ali Ibn Hamzah says: We got up and proceeded towards Kufah. There, my friend‘ divested himself of all his possessions - even his clothes - either returning them to their owners or giving them to charity. I collected some money from my friends to .purchase some clothes for him and I used to send him money for his expenses

A few months after this incident, he fell ill and we used to visit him regularly during his sickness. One day, when I paid him a visit, I found him on the verge of dying. Opening ’his eyes he said to me: “O

Ali! The Imam (as) has fulfilled his promise." Then he departed from the world. We' .performed the ablutions, shrouded his body and finally buried him

Some time later, I visited the Imam (as). As soon as his eyes fell upon me, he said: "O' ".'Ali! I have fulfilled my promise to your friend

May I be made your ransom! It is as you say. He too mentioned it (the guarantee of" (Paradise) to me before his death," I said."(۱)

Return before Death (۳

Mua'wiyah Ibn Wahab narrates: "When we set out for Makkah, there was an old man with us who used to engage himself in acts of worship, but did not profess the Shi'ite .faith. This old man was accompanied by his nephew, who was of the Shi'ites

During the journey, the old man fell sick. I said to his nephew: "Why don't you inform him of the true faith; it is possible that Allah may take him away from the world in the ".state of true faith and Wilayah

However, the other people advised him to leave the man alone and to let him die upon his own faith. However his nephew did not heed their advice. He went to his uncle and said: "O' Uncle! After the death of the Noble Prophet (S), the people, with the exception of a handful who had adhered to Amirul Mo'minin (as), became apostates despite the fact that the Caliphate (of Amirul Mo'minin (as)) had already been

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Shanidani-ha-e-Tarikh, Page ۵۵; Mahajjatul Baid'a, Volume ۳, Page ۲۵۴ -۱

".(stipulated by the Noble Prophet (S

Hearing these words, the old man heaved a sigh and said, "I accept this faith," and ".then breathed his last

Mua'wiyah Ibn Wahab relates: "We entered Madinah and arrived before Imam Sadiq (as). 'Ali Ibn Sari, one of our companions, related the incident of the old man's repentance and his acceptance of Imamate just before his death, to the Imam (as) ".who said: "He is of the inmates of Paradise

Ali Ibn Sari remarked in astonishment: "The old man did not know anything about our' faith and was totally ignorant of its laws and rulings; it was only when his soul was "!about to separate from his body that he accepted this faith

The Imam (as) explained: "What (more) do you want of him? By Allah! He has (already) (entered Paradise."(۱)

Abu Lubabah (۴

Abu Lubabah was one of the distinguished companions of the Noble Prophet (S) and had participated in the battle of Uhud and the conquest of Makkah. One of the .sensitive aspects of his life was the incident of his repentance

When the tribe of Bani Quraidhah violated their covenant with the Noble Prophet (S), the Noble Prophet (S) initiated a military expedition against them and besieged their fort. Some persons from the tribe of Aus approached him and requested: "Just as you had handed over the fate of the tribe of Bani Qainaqa'a to be decided by the tribe of Khazraj, leave it upon us to decide the fate of the tribe of Bani

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Khazinatul Jawahir, Page ۳۱۲; Raud'atul Anwar of Sabzwari -۱

".Quraidhah

Will you be satisfied if I were to appoint one person from your tribe to rule in the" .matter?" the Noble Prophet (S) asked

They agreed. The Noble Prophet (S) suggested Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh, but the Bani Quraidhah refused to accept him. They told him to send Abu Lubabah to them so that they could confer with him. The Noble Prophet (S) assigned Abu Lubabah, who had his house, property and family in the fort of Bani Quraidhah, the task of conducting .consultations with them

As soon as Abu Lubabah entered the fort, men and women, old and young, surrounded him and began lamenting and complaining to him (over the state of affairs) with the intention of attracting his pity and compassion. Then they asked: "?("Should we submit before the rule of the Noble Prophet (S

You could do that," he replied, making a gesture (by pointing to his neck) to indicate" .that submission was equivalent to death

He quickly realized that by performing this act, he had been unfaithful and disloyal to the Noble Prophet (S). It was on this occasion that the following verse was revealed: "O you who believe! Be not unfaithful to Allah and the Messenger, nor be unfaithful to your trusts while you know. Know that your property and your children are a (temptation, and that Allah is He with Whom there is a mighty reward."(۱

Overcome with shame, he came out of the fort and proceeded straight towards the mosque of Madinah and, tying

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۱ - Noble Qur'an, Suratul Anfal (۸), Verse ۲۷-۲۸ يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَ الرَّسُولَ وَ تَخُونُوا أَماناتِكُمْ وَ أَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ وَ اعْلَمُوا اَنَّما اَموَالَكُم وَ اَولاَدَكُم فِتنَةٌ وَ انَّ اللهَ عِندَهُ اَجر عَظِيم

himself to one of its pillars in the mosque, called out: “None should untie me till Allah ”.accepts my repentance

He remained in that state for ten to fifteen days, allowing himself to be untied only for .prayers or to go to the washroom

If Abu Lubabah had come to me, I would have sought forgiveness for him but since“ he himself awaits Allah’s forgiveness, leave him alone till Allah forgives him,” the .Noble Prophet (S) commented when he came to know what Abu Lababah had done

Umme Salamah states: “One day, at dawn, I saw the Noble Prophet (S) happy and .smiling. May Allah always keep you smiling! What is the reason for it?” I asked him

Jibra`il has informed me that Abu Lubabah’s repentance has been accepted,” he“ .said

.Do I have your permission to inform him of the good news?” I asked“

You may if you wish,” he answered. From inside the room I called out: “Glad tidings,“ ”.O’ Abu Lubabah! Allah has accepted your repentance

The people rushed forward to untie him but he ordered: “I place you under the oath of ”.Allah that none, except the Noble Prophet (S), should untie me

When the Noble Prophet (S) arrived in the mosque for the morning prayers, he untied Abu Lubabah from the pillar which stands even today, in the Mosque of the Noble Prophet (S) and is popularly known as the ‘Pillar of Repentance’ or the ‘Pillar of Abu (Lubabah’.(١)

Buhlul, the Gravedigger (۵

Buhlul(۲), the Gravedigger

Mu’adh Ibn Jabal was in tears when

1- Paighambar Wa Yaran, Volume ١, Page ١٢٩; Majma' al-Bayan, under the discussion regarding verse ١٠٢ of the chapter al-Taubah: وَ آخَرُونَ اعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلاً صالِحاً وَ آخَرَ سَيِّئاً عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

2- Editor's note: Not to be confused with Buhlul who lived during the time of Imam Rid'a .

he arrived in the presence of the Noble Prophet (S) and greeted him. The Noble ”?Prophet (S) replied to his greeting and asked: “What makes you cry

At the door of the mosque, there is a good-looking youth who weeps as intensely as“ .a mother whose young son has died, and he wishes to meet you,” replied Mu’adh

.The Noble Prophet (S) agreed to meet him

The youth entered and greeted the Noble Prophet (S) who returned his greeting and ”?enquired: “Why do you weep

Why should I not weep? I have committed sins which Allah will never forgive and He“ .is bound to hurl me into Hell,” said the youth

”?Have you associated someone with Allah“

”.No“

”?Have you killed anybody“

”.No“

Even if your sins are of the magnitude of mountains, Allah shall forgive them,” said“ .(the Noble Prophet (S

.My sins are greater than the mountains,” the youth explained“

Are your sins in the magnitude of the seven earths, the seas, the sands, the trees, all“ that lies on the earth, in the skies, the stars, the Throne and the Chair?” asked the .((Noble Prophet (S

”.My sins are greater than all of these things“

”?Woe unto you! Are your sins greater than your Lord“

The youth lowered his head and replied, “Allah is devoid of all blemishes; it is my Lord, ”.who is greater

.(Would you not relate one of your sins to me?" enquired the Noble Prophet (S"

Why not?" responded the"

youth, whose name was Buhul. “For seven years I used to dig up the graves of the dead, take out their shrouds and sell them. One night, a maiden from amongst the Ansar (The Helpers) died and was buried in the cemetery. When I dug open her grave to remove the shroud from her body, the Satan tempted me and I committed a grave sin. As I was turning back, the body called out to me: “O’ Youth! Don’t you fear the ”!Ruler of the Day of Judgment? Woe unto you of the fire of the Day of Judgment

.Having narrated this, the youth wanted to know what he should do

O’ Sinner! Stay away from me for I fear that I might burn in your fire too!” cried out“ .(the Noble Prophet (S

The youth left, heading straight towards the mountains. He tied his hands to his neck .and became engrossed in worship, supplications and seeking forgiveness

For forty days, he wept day and night to the extent that even the wild beasts were affected by his weeping. After forty days he asked Allah to either punish him by means of fire or forgive him, so that he might not have to face humiliation on the Day .of Judgment

Allah revealed the following verse, which refers to the forgiveness of Buhul: “And those who, when they commit an indecency or do injustices to their souls, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their

(faults… and who forgives the faults but Allah."(1)

The Noble Prophet (S) recited this verse with a smiling face and then asked: "Who can take me to that youth?"

Mu'adh agreed to take him. Accompanied by Mu'adh, the Noble Prophet (S) went to the place where the youth was. He saw him standing between two boulders, hands tied to his neck and engaged in supplication. His face had become dark due to the scorching sun and all his eyelashes had fallen off due to the intense weeping. Wild beasts had gathered around him while the birds circled over his head, all of them weeping over his distressed and pitiable state.

The Noble Prophet (S) advanced towards him, untied his hands and cleared the soil from the top of his head.

"O' Buhul! Glad tidings for you; you have been liberated by Allah from the fire (of Hell)," he said.

Then, turning to his companions, he said, "This is how you should make amends for your sins."(2)

29. Ignorance

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَ امُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَ أَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

"Take to forgiveness and enjoin good and turn aside from the ignorant."(3)

Imam 'Ali (as) has said:

أَلْجَهْلُ أَصْلُ كُلِّ شَرٍّ.

"Ignorance is the root of all evils."(4)

Short Expalantion

Ignorance is a state that exists within humans and one who possesses it advances towards darkness, whereas one who keeps it away from himself reaches luminosity .and acquires discernment and insight

If a person chooses an incorrect path for himself and

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۱ - Holy Qur'an, Surah Ale 'Imran (۳), Verse ۱۳۵: وَ الَّذِينَ إِذا فَعَلُوا فاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَ مَنْ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ

۲- Risalah Liqaullah, Page ۶۲; Majalis as-Saduq

۳- Noble Qur'an, Suratul A`raf (۷), Verse ۱۹۹

۴- Ghurar al-Hikam, Tradition ۸۱۹

permits ignorance to guide him in his actions, he would be looked upon as a sinner and of the inmates of Hell. However, if he sets about on the correct path, and acts on the .basis of knowledge and cognizance, he shall be of the delivered ones

Being pleased and satisfied over one’s actions is the key that opens the door of ignorance and the worst trait of an ignorant person is to claim to possess knowledge .despite being ignorant

An ignorant person, upon noticing his own faults, does not experience uneasiness and discomfort, and upon being advised, does not pay heed to it. Despite having .knowledge of his ignorance (called simple ignorance) he still commits blunders

The Ignorant Commander (۱

Ya’qub Laith Saffar (d. ۲۶۵ ah) had a commander by the name of Ibrahim who despite .being brave and courageous, was extremely ignorant

Once during winter, Ya’qub ordered that his personal winter clothes be given to Ibrahim. Ibrahim had a servant by the name of Ahmad Ibn ‘Abdullah, who had hatred towards him. When Ibrahim returned home, Ahmad asked him: “Don’t you know that whomsoever Ya’qub Laith gives his personal clothes, he puts that person to death ”?within that week

.Oh no! I was not aware of this. What is the way out?” asked Ibrahim“

Ahmad suggested to him that he should flee from there. He even agreed to accompany Ibrahim and arranged to meet him the following day. Later, Ahmad secretly went to Ya’qub Laith and informed him that

Ibrahim was intending to flee to Sistan from where he would initiate a rebellion against Ya'qub Laith. Ya'qub pondered for a while and was on the verge of ordering .his army to prepare for battle with Ibrahim when Ahmad made a request

Allow me to single-handedly bring Ibrahim's severed head before you," he said to" .Ya'qub

Ya'qub Laith agreed. As Ibrahim was about to leave the city with his soldiers, Ahmad attacked him from behind, severed his head with his sword and brought it before Ya'qub Laith. Ya'qub handed the position of Ibrahim, his ignorant commander, to (Ahmad who thus came to enjoy great esteem in his eyes.(۱

The Caliph's Ignorant Son (۲

Mahdi 'Abbasi, the third 'Abbasid Caliph, had a son by the name of Ibrahim, who was a misguided individual. He showed intense enmity and malice towards Amirul Mo'minin .(as) in particular

:Once he approached Ma'mun, the seventh 'Abbasid Caliph, and said to him

I saw 'Ali (as) in my dream. We were travelling together till we reached a bridge" whereupon he granted me precedence in crossing it. I said to him: 'You claim to be the Commander of the Faithful, but we are more deserving of this status'. 'Ali (as) did not ".give me a proper answer

.How did he answer you?" Mamun questioned"

.He simply greeted me several times by saying 'Peace, Peace'," replied Ibrahim"

By Allah! He has answered you loud and clear," explained Ma'mun. Ibrahim was" ,puzzled. Ma'mun went on, "He viewed you as an ignorant person

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Namunah-e-Ma'arif, Volume ۴, Page ۹۳ -۱

unworthy of responding to. This is because Allah, describing His special servants in the Qur’an, says: “And the servants of the Beneficent Allah are they who walk on the earth in humbleness, and when the ignorant address them, they say: Peace,”(۱) which is (an expression) indicative of their lack of regard (with respect to the ignorant ones) .and their (personal) greatness

Ali (as) looked upon you as an ignorant person and behaved with you as the Qur’an“ (has recommended when dealing with ignorant persons.”(۲)

The Handsome but Ignorant Person (۳

A pleasant, dignified looking person entered the court of Abu Yusuf Kufi (d. ۱۸۲ ah), the judge of Harun Rashid who regarded him with great respect. The person sat in the gathering with such silence and dignity, that it prompted the judge to regard him as a .person of great virtue. He asked the man if he wanted to say something

.I seek an answer to a question,” said the person“

.Whatever I know, I shall answer you,” responded the judge humbly“

”?The person enquired, “When can a person break his fast

.When the sun sets,” replied the judge“

”?What if the sun does not set till midnight“

Hearing this, the judge laughed out and said, “How appropriately has the poet Jarir :Ibn ‘Atiyyah (a poet of the Umayyad period, who had died in the year ۱۱۰ ah) said

Silence is a beauty for a person who is weak and ignorant(۳); surely, the intelligence of a person is known by his speech, just as his lack

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۱- Noble Qur’an, Suratul Furqan (۲۵), Verse ۶۳: وَ إِذا خاطَبَهُمُ الْجاهِلُونَ قالُوا سَلاماً

۲- Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani, Volume ۲, Page ۲۰; Safinatul Bihar, Volume ۱, Page ۷۹

٣- وَ فيِ الصَّمتِ زينٌ لِلْغَبی

".of intelligence also becomes manifest as a result of his speech

(Thus, the judge came to know of the ignorance of the good-looking person.(١)

Qais Ibn 'Asim (۴

Qais Ibn 'Asim was a tribal leader during the Age of Ignorance but he later accepted .Islam

Once, during his old age, in order to seek ways to make amends for his past misdeeds, he arrived in the presence of the Noble Prophet (S) and said: "In the past, ignorance had instigated numerous fathers to bury their innocent daughters alive. I too, had buried twelve of my daughters alive at short intervals. My wife gave birth to my thirteenth daughter in secret and, making it appear to me as if it had been a .(stillborn child, she secretly sent the infant to her own relatives (for upbringing

Years passed till one day I returned home suddenly and unexpectedly from one of my trips, only to find a small girl in my house. Since she resembled my children, I found .myself perplexed till eventually I came to know that she was my daughter

I immediately took hold of the girl, who was weeping profusely, and took her to a remote location, refusing to permit myself to be affected by her wailing. She kept pleading, 'I shall return to my maternal uncles and shall never come to your house ".again', but I paid no heed to her request and buried her alive

When he had narrated this, Qais noticed that tears flowed down the Noble Prophet's eyes and heard him

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Lataif al-Tawaf, Page ۴۱۲ -١

murmuring: “One who does not look upon others with mercy shall not be looked upon (with mercy.”(1)

”!Then turning to Qais, he said, “You have difficult days ahead of you

.What should I do to lessen the burden of my misdeeds?” inquired Qais“

(For every daughter killed, set free a slave-girl,” replied the Noble Prophet (S).(2)“

A Long Beard (5

Jahidh Basri, (d. 249 ah) who has a book to his name in every branch of science, states: “Ma’mun ‘Abbasi and a few other individuals had gathered together and were .engaged in conversation

.A person who sports a long beard is stupid and foolish,” one of them remarked“

Some others objected by saying, “On the contrary, we have seen individuals growing ”.long beards but who were clever and intelligent

.Impossible!” exclaimed Ma’mun“

At that moment, a man with a long beard and riding a camel came towards them. Ma’mun, in order to prove his point, summoned the person and asked him what his .name was

.Abu Hamdwaih”, replied the man“

.What is your agnomen?” asked Ma’mun“

”.Alawiyyah“‘

Ma’mun said to those around him, “A person who is so ignorant so as to be unable to differentiate between a name and an agnomen, all his other acts would also be ”.characterized with the same ignorance

”?Turning to the man once again, he asked, “What work do you do

I am a jurisprudent and an expert in various sciences. If the king desires, he can“ ”.question me

A person sold a sheep to another person, who took the animal in his possession. But“ he had

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۱- مَن لاَ یَرْحَم لاَ یُرْحَم

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, Volume ۱, Page ۱۵; Jahiliyyat Wa Islam, Page ۶۳۲ -۲

not yet paid the price of the animal when it released its dung, which fell into the eyes of another person, blinding him. Under the circumstances, whose obligation is it to pay the compensation for the injury caused?" asked Ma'mun.

The person with the long beard reflected for a while and then said: "The compensation should be paid by the seller and not the purchaser." Those around wanted to know why.

"It is because the seller did not inform the purchaser that he had placed a catapult inside the rear of the sheep, which it used for hurling stones in order to protect itself," explained the person.

Hearing this, Ma'mun and those around him burst out in laughter. The man was given some money and he left.

"The truth of my statement has become manifest before you that the elders have stated(1): A long-bearded person is a dimwit," said Ma'mun.(2)

30. Greed

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

إِنَّ الإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوْعاً

"Surely man is created of a hasty temperament."(3)

The Noble Prophet (S) said:

يَشِيْبُ ابْنُ آدَمَ وَ تَشُبُّ فِيهِ خَصْلَتَانِ: أَلْحَرْصُ وَ طُوْلُ الأَمَلِ.

"(As man becomes old, two attributes in him turn young - greed and lofty aspirations."(4)

Short Expalantion

If man is greedy in acquiring things, he shall not possess the proximity of Allah, since

he has abandoned the attribute of tawakkul (trust in Allah), is not content with what .Allah has appointed for him and has adopted hastiness, which is an attribute of Satan

;Allah has created the world similar to a shadow

p: ۶۴

There are traditions that censure the keeping of a long beard. One of the things, -۱ which Imam 'Ali mentioned in his criticism of the people of Basrah, was their long beards. The Noble Prophet regarded not sporting a long beard as being one of the (felicities of man. (Safinatul Bihar, Volume۲, Page ۵۰۹

Jawame' al-Hikayat, Page ۳۰۰ -۲

Noble Qur'an, Suratul Ma'arij (۷۰), Verse ۱۹ -۳

Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۲, Page ۱۰۰ -۴

following the shadow yields nothing except for exhaustion and fatigue. If one seeks the world in excess of what is necessary, not only does he not acquire it but also .suffers troubles and hardships

The Noble Prophet (S) has said: “A greedy person (always) remains excluded.” And an .excluded person is hated and reproached

A greedy person’s thoughts are disturbed and his troubles numerous – constantly involved in seeking and computing riches, neither at peace in this world nor inclined (towards the Hereafter.(١

The Mud from a Grave is a Greedy Person’s Medicine (١

Sa’di relates: “I had heard that a trader who owned forty slaves and one hundred and fifty camel-loads of goods used to travel from city to city for the purpose of trade. One .night, on the island of Kish, he invited me into his room

I went to his room but throughout that night, he was restless. He kept rambling on ceaselessly and would say: “Such and such storeroom of mine is in Turkistan, a certain cargo of mine is in India, this is the deed of sale of a particular land, another cargo is held up due to some merchandise, such and such person is the guarantor for a loan... I am contemplating travelling to Alexandria, but the Mediterranean Sea is stormy at ...the moment

O’ Sa’di! I have another journey before me, which if I were to accomplish, I would ”.spend the rest of my life in solitude and never embark upon any more journeys, ever

Which is that journey after which you will“

١- Tadhkeratul Haqaiq, Page ٣٣

never undertake any other journey?" I asked him.

He replied, " I wish to take Iranian sulphur to China, for I have heard that it sells at a very high price there; from China, I shall take porcelain bowls to Rome; in Rome I shall purchase the exquisite Roman silk for selling it in India; in India, I shall take Indian iron to Halab (Syria) from where I shall purchase the Halabi mirror and glass, and proceed towards Yemen; there, I shall purchase Yemeni clothes and bring them to Iran after which I shall quit travelling and settle down to manage a shop."

He continued on to such an extent that he was eventually overcome with exhaustion and, unable to speak any more, he said to me: "O' Sa'di! Tell me what you think of what you have just heard."

I said, "You surely know that at a very far place from the land of Ghour (between Hirat and Ghaznah) when a trader fell off his mount and died, a person commented: "Only two things can satiate a greedy world-loving person - contentment or the earth of a grave."(1)

2) Greedy for Pleasure

Yazid Ibn 'Abdul Malik (the tenth Umayyad caliph) became caliph after 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz. Contrary to his predecessor, he used to engage himself, day and night, in feasting, festive gatherings, drinking and merry-making in the company of two of his slave-girls, Salamah and Hababah, who were beautiful singers.

Hababah eventually brushed aside her rival Salamah and took the reins of the

1- Hikayat-ha-e-Gulistan, Page 166

.caliph in her hands

Maslamah Ibn ‘Abdul Malik, approached his brother Yazid and said: "‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdul ‘Aziz was extremely just whereas you, in contrast, drink and engage yourself in various pleasures and have handed over the kingdom to a singer, Hababah. Moreover, while the people are keen to catch a glimpse of you, you have dropped yourself into her arms. Leave her aside and pay attention to the affairs of the ".caliphate

Yazid resolved to heed his brother's counselling and decided to lead the Friday prayers. Meanwhile, Hababah had instructed her slave-girls to inform her the moment the caliph stepped out. As soon as the slave-girls informed her that the caliph had come out, she appeared before him and, with a lute in hand and in a melodious and enchanting voice, recited the following poem: "If an enamoured one has lost his intelligence, do not censure him; the poor thing is exhibiting patience due to the ".intensity of his anguish

The caliph, seeing his beloved one in that engaging state and hearing her captivating .voice, covered his face with his hands

Hababah! Enough! Stop it!" he cried and then recited the following poem: "Life is" nothing except living luxuriously and gratifying oneself; even if the people censure ".you

And then he shrieked: "O' the beloved of the beloved ones! You have spoken the truth. May Allah destroy anyone who criticizes me for being in love with you! O' Slave! Go and ask my brother

".Maslamah to go to the mosque and lead the prayers in my place

He then headed towards his pleasure-hall first, and later, for greater fun and enjoyment, proceeded towards Bait al-Rass, which is situated near Damascus. Once there, he said to his slaves: "People think that there is no pleasure without any ".bitterness and I wish to prove the falsity of this notion of theirs

He remained there in order that no news or letters ever reached him. He remained .completely engrossed in merry-making without the slightest of troubles

However, as fate would have it, one day a seed of pomegranate got stuck in Hababah's throat and, following a bout of severe coughing, she passed away. Day and night, the caliph held the lifeless body of Hababah in his arms and shed tears over it, and it was only on the insistence of her relatives that her stinking body was eventually buried. The caliph too, after this incident, did not live for more than fifteen (days and was laid to rest near the grave of Hababah.(١

Isa and the Greedy Person' (٣

Prophet 'Isa (as) had been travelling in the company of another person when, after having journeyed for a period, they were overcome by hunger. They reached a village where 'Isa (as) requested his companion to go and bring some bread, while he .engaged himself in prayers

The man returned with three loaves of bread and waited for 'Isa (as) to join him, but since his prayers continued for a long time, the person

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١- Rahnama-e-Sa'adat, Volume ٣, Page ٦٥٧; Tarikh-e-Tamaddun-e-Islam, Volume ١, Page ٨٦

.quietly consumed one loaf of bread

.Were there three loaves of bread?" 'Isa (as) asked after completing his prayers"

.No, there were only two," replied the man"

A short while after they had eaten their food, they set off again and on the way encountered a herd of deer. 'Isa (as) summoned one of the deer towards him, sacrificed it, and both the men sat down to eat it. When they had finished eating, 'Isa (as) commanded: "O' deer! Move by the permission of Allah!" The deer immediately .came to life and sprinted away

Witnessing this, the man stood dumbfounded and uttered, "Subhanallah (Glory be to ".(Allah

I put you under the oath of He, Who has manifested this sign of His power before" .you! Tell me what happened to the third loaf of bread?" 'Isa (as) asked him

.There were only two loaves of bread!" the man insisted"

They continued on their journey and soon reached the outskirts of a large village .where they happened to see three gold bricks lying before them

.There appears to be great wealth here!" the man remarked"

Yes. One brick is for you, the second for me and I shall hand over the third to the" .(person who ate the third loaf of bread," said 'Isa (as

".The greedy man blurted out, "I ate the third loaf of bread

Isa (as) parted company with him and handing him the bricks, said: "All three bricks' ".are your property now

The man sat down

beside the gold bricks and was lost in thought as to how he would carry them and put them to good use, when three persons passed by. When their eyes fell upon the gold bricks, they killed the man and took possession of the bricks. As they were hungry, they decided that one of them would go to the nearby village and arrange to get some bread. The person who had gone to get the bread, thought to himself: "I shall poison the bread so that the other two are killed and then I shall have all the three bricks for ".myself

In the meantime, his other two friends had also conspired to kill him upon his return so that they could divide his share of the bricks between themselves. When he returned, they killed him as planned and with great satisfaction in their actions, began eating the bread. Before long they too died as a result of the poison contained in the .bread

On his return, 'Isa (as), observing four dead persons lying near the three gold bricks (remarked(۱): This is how the world conducts itself with those who covet it.(۲

Dhul Qarnain (۴

Dhul Qarnain(۳), during the course of his journey, reached Dhulumat, where he came across a palace in which he noticed a youth standing there dressed in white, face .raised towards the skies and his hands placed upon his lips

.The youth, upon seeing him, asked him who he was

.Dhul Qarnain," came the reply"

The youth (who

۱- هَكَذاَ تَفعَلُ الدُّنْياَ بِاَهلِهَا

Pand-e-Tarikh, Volume ۲, Page ۱۲۴; Anwarul Nu'maniyah, Page ۳۵۳ -۲

His name has been mentioned in Suratul Kahf of the Noble Qur'an; he is the same -۳ Alexander, of the progeny of Prophet Nuh who had traveled to the east and the

west of the world and constructed the city of Alexandria. Since he used to gather his hair in the form of two horns near his forehead, he came to be popularly known as Dhul Qarnain, – 'The possessor of two horns'. He lived for nearly two centuries and .had conquered around ۳۶ countries all over the world

was the angel Israfeel) said to him, “When the Day of Judgment arrives, I shall blow the Trumpet.” Then, picking up a stone and handing it to Dhul Qarnain, he said, “If this stone becomes satiated, you too shall become satiated and if this stone happens to be hungry, you too shall be hungry!”

Dhul Qarnain carried the stone to his friends and placed it on a scale in order to weigh it, but despite weighing against a thousand similar stones, it still weighed more than all of them taken together.(۱)

At that moment, Prophet Khidhr (as) came to them; placing a stone on the opposite scale, he put some earth over the stone when suddenly, all of them observed that the scales had balanced perfectly. Dhul Qarnain wanted to know the reason for this from Prophet Khidhr (as), who explained: “Allah wished to admonish you that in spite of conquering so many nations, you are still not satisfied; man can never become satiated except when a handful of earth is dropped over his face, and nothing can fill his stomach except earth.”

Dhul Qarnain began to weep and turned back.

On another occasion, he came across a man sitting near a grave and fiddling with some decayed bones and decomposed skulls that lay before him. He asked the man what he was doing.

The man replied, “I want to separate the bones of the kings from those of the poor ones but find myself unable to do so.”

Dhul Qarnain passed

p: ۷۱

۱– It had been a supernatural act, performed to jolt Dhul Qarnain into awareness and lead him towards subservience and obedience of Allah.

".by and thought to himself, "That act of his was intended for me

He then settled down in Daumah al-Jandal(۱), abandoned his quest for global (conquest and engaged himself in Allah's worship.(۲

(Ash'ab Ibn Jubair Madani (d. ۱۵۴ ah (۵

He was a person who was squint-eyed, bald on two sides of his head and unable to lam). He possessed such intense greed for material) ل ra) and) ر pronounce the letters wealth and food that he never seemed to be fully satisfied in this regard. When questioned about this attribute of his, he replied: "Each time I see smoke bellowing out of someone's house, I feel as if they are preparing the food for me and I sit waiting for the food. But when, despite waiting for a very long time, there is no sign of !any food, I dip dry bread in water and eat it

And whenever I hear the adhan being recited over a deceased, I feel that the deceased has set aside one third of his wealth for me and with this thought in mind, I go to his house and assist in giving him the ablutions, covering him in his shroud and, finally participating in his burial. But when after his burial there is no sign of the .wealth, I return home disappointed and dejected

And when I walk through the streets, I spread my cloak apart in the hope that perhaps a person, while throwing a thing from his roof or window to his neighbour, may slip-up and that thing

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Fakhr Razi states: Dhul Qarnain returned to Iraq and fell sick in the city of Zur, - ۱ (where he eventually passed away. (Safinatul Bihar, Volume ۲, ۴۲۶

Namunah-e-Ma'arif, Volume ۴, Page ۲۳۴; Layaliul Akhbar, Page ۴۶ -۲

".may land in my cloak

It is said that once while passing through a street, he came across some children .engaged in playing games. He decided to tell them a lie

O' Children! Why do you stand here when at a crossroad further down there is a" person distributing his load of red and white apples amongst the people for free?" he .told them

Hearing this, the children immediately rushed towards the crossroad. As they ran, Ash'ab was himself overcome with greed and he too started to run towards the .crossroad

.You have fabricated the story yourself, so why do you run?" the people asked him"

He replied, "The children ran out of seriousness whereas I run out of greed. Maybe there is really someone out there distributing the apples and I do not wish to remain (deprived of them."(١

Envy .٣١

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلى ماَ آتاَهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

(Or do they envy the people for what Allah has given them of His grace?"(٢"

:Imam Sadiq (as) has said

إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ يَغْبِطُ وَ لاَ يَحْسِدُ.

(A true believer exults, but never envies."(٣"

Short Expalantion

Envy stems from blindness of the heart and rejection of Allah's grace – the two wings

of kufr and disbelief. An envious person's evil afflicts him before it can afflict the envied; just like Iblees, whose evil overtook his own self and made him the eternally .accursed one, whereas Adam went on to attain the rank of Prophethood

The balance (of deeds) of a jealous person

Lataif al-Tawaif, Page ۳۶۱ -۱

Noble Qur'an, Suratul Nisa (۴), Verse ۵۴ -۲

Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۲, Page ۱۹۵ -۳

is light, thereby making Hell his abode, whereas the balance (of deeds) of the envied person is heavy, thereby leading him to Paradise. In view of this, Qabeel, who had murdered his brother Habeel because of this vice, hurled himself in Hell while sending .his brother to Paradise

If this vice penetrates into the soul of a person, he would never be able to repent (for his misdeeds) but instead, would always be on the lookout to cause harm and injury to (those, who are either superior to him or possess more than him.(١

The Friend of 'Isa (١

Imam Sadiq (as) said: "Stay away from jealousy and do not harbour envy with respect to one another." Having said this, the Imam (as) continued: "One of the practices which Prophet 'Isa (as) adopted for himself, was to travel from city to city. During one of these journeys, he took along with him a companion who was of short build and .who also happened to be one of his attendants

After a while, they reached the sea. 'Isa (as) recited the name of Allah, stepped onto the water and began walking over it effortlessly. Repeating what 'Isa (as) has performed, the companion recited what the prophet had and began to follow him over the water. In the middle of the sea he thought to himself, "'Isa is a prophet and walks over water and I am walking over water too, so what superiority does he "?possess over me

These thoughts hardly crossed

Tadhkeratul Haqaiq, Page ۴۹ -١

.his mind when he suddenly fell into the water and began to plead to 'Isa (as) for help

.Isa (as) took hold of his hand and pulled him out of the water'

What did you say that caused you to fall into the water?" he asked. The companion" .confessed to the thoughts that had passed through his mind

You placed yourself in a position other than what Allah had ordained for you, thus" becoming the object of His wrath," remarked 'Isa (as). "Seek forgiveness so that you ".regain your previous rank once again

As soon as the companion sought forgiveness, he began to follow 'Isa (as) over the ".water once again

After narrating this incident, Imam Sadiq (as) advised: "Fear Allah and avoid (jealousy."(١

Abdullah Ibn Ubayy' (٢

As the people of Madinah were accepting the Noble Prophet (S) in increasing numbers, 'Abdullah Ibn Ubayy, one of the Jewish elders, became even more envious .towards the Noble Prophet (S), and thus planned to kill him

He invited the Noble Prophet (S), 'Ali (as) and the other companions for his daughter's wedding-feast. Meanwhile, he had a huge pit dug up in the courtyard of his house, filled its base with swords, arrows and lances, and had it covered up with a carpet. In addition to this, he poisoned the food and also concealed some Jews, armed with poisoned swords, in the house. His idea was that when the Noble Prophet (S) and his companions walked towards the pit, they would fall into it whereupon the armed Jews

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Shanidani-ha-e-Tarikh, Page ٣١۶; Mahajjatul Baid'a, Volume ۵, Page ٣٢٨ -١

would rush out and put them to death. He had poisoned the food so that should this .plan fail, they would be killed by means of the poison

Jibra`il, through the orders of Allah, revealed these two plans which stemmed from jealousy and envy to the Noble Prophet (S) and said to him: "Your Lord says: Go to 'Abdullah Ibn Ubayy's house and sit wherever he requests you to sit and eat whatever he presents before you, for I shall suffice you and protect you from his evil ".designs

The Noble Prophet (S), Amirul Mo'minin (as) and the other companions entered 'Abdullah's house. 'Abdullah ushered them to the courtyard of his house. As per his request, all of them sat over the pit but nothing happened, much to 'Abdullah's .astonishment

He then ordered the poisoned food to be brought. When it was placed before them, the Noble Prophet (S) told 'Ali (as) to recite the following over the food: "In the name of Allah, The Healer; in the name of Allah, The Sufficient; in the name of Allah, The Acquitter; in the name of Allah, with Whose name no thing or sickness, in the earth or ".in the heaven, can cause harm, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing

Then, all of them ate the food and came out of the gathering without being harmed in the slightest. 'Abdullah's bewilderment knew no bounds; he assumed that the food had not been poisoned and so ordered the armed Jews to

.eat it, as a result of which, all of them died

Meanwhile, his daughter who was the bride, decided to sit down on the carpet covering the pit. As soon as she did so, she plummeted into the pit. Her shrieks filled .the air, only to subside with her death

Abdullah ordered his servants not to reveal the cause of all the deaths in the house.' When the news of these incidents reached the Noble Prophet (S), he asked the .jealous 'Abdullah what had happened

My daughter fell off the roof of the house; as for the others, they died due to" (diarrhoea," he replied.(۱

The Strange Act of the Envious Person (۳

During the caliphate of Hadi 'Abbasi(۲), there lived in Baghdad a wealthy person who was righteous and beneficent. In his vicinity, there resided a person, who was envious of his wealth, and no matter how much he tried to taint the wealthy person's prestige and bring him into disrepute, he could not succeed. Finally, he decided to purchase a .slave, train him and then use him to implement his evil intention

One day, after a year had passed, he asked his slave: "How obedient are you to your "?master

The slave replied, "If you ask me to hurl myself into the fire, I shall do so." The man .was overjoyed to hear this

My neighbour is rich and wealthy and I bear animosity towards him. I want you to" carry out my instructions. Tonight, both of us shall climb onto the roof of

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Khazinah al-Jawahir, Page ۳۴۴; Biharul Anwar, Volume ۶ -۱

He was the brother of Harun al-Rashid and was the caliph for almost a year after -۲ .which, the caliphate reached Harun

his house where you will kill me so that he is accused of my murder and is put to death .by the government as a punishment for killing me," he said to the slave

However much the slave insisted on not carrying out these instructions, it was to no avail and the man remained unyielding. At midnight, as per the orders of his envious master, the slave severed his master's head on top the roof of the rich neighbour and .hurried back to his bed

The next day, the death of the jealous person came to light and Hadi 'Abbasi had the rich person arrested, and subjected him to interrogation. He then summoned the .slave and interrogated him too

The slave, observing that the rich person was totally innocent, divulged the incident of jealousy and the subsequent killing. Hearing the incident, the Caliph lowered his head, .reflected for a while and then raised it again

Although you have killed a person, you exhibited courage and saved an innocent" .person from accusation, therefore, I shall set you free," the Caliph said to the slave

In this manner, the harm of envy and jealousy rebounded upon the envious person (himself.(١

The Envy of the Womenfolk (۴

.Ibn Abi Laila was the judge during the caliphate of Mansur Dawaniqi

Many strange and interesting cases are brought before the judges and it is my desire" .that you relate one of them to me," Mansur said to him

Ibn Abi Laila related: "One day an old and humble lady approached

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Dastan-ha-e-Ma, Volume ٢, Page ١٣٨; Mustadrakul Wasa`il, Volume ٣ (In the - ١ (biography of Fad'lullah Rawandi

me and implored me to defend her right and punish her oppressor. I asked her who .she wanted to complain about

".She replied, "My niece

I ordered the niece to be brought before me. When she arrived, I observed that she possessed charming looks and an appealing physique. I asked her the reason for her aunt's complaint whereupon she related the entire case as follows: "I am the daughter of this old woman's brother and she is my aunt. My father died while I was still a child and this aunt of mine took care of me and was never negligent with respect .to my upbringing. When I grew up, with my consent, she married me to a goldsmith

My comfortable life made my aunt envious of me. She ornamented her daughter and brought her before my husband, who became captivated by her and sought her hand .in marriage

This aunt of mine stipulated that she would marry her daughter to him only if the authority to retain or divorce me was placed in her hands. My husband agreed to this .condition

After a period, my aunt had me divorced and I separated from my husband." Meanwhile, my aunt's husband, who had been away on a journey, returned home. After realising what had happened, he used to console me. I presented myself to him in such a manner that he found me attractive. Eventually, he fell for me and .expressed his desire to marry me

I said to him, "I shall only agree upon the condition that the authority of divorcing my aunt be placed in my hands."

"He agreed and after the marriage, I had my aunt divorced and I continued to live with this husband, who died after a period of time. One day, my first husband approached me and expressed his inclination to marry me again.

"I am willing to marry you again but upon the condition that you should grant me the authority to either retain or divorce my aunt's daughter," I told him.

He accepted and once again I got married to my first husband and, with the authority vested in me, I also had my aunt's daughter divorced.

Now you can judge that I have committed no offense; all that I have done is to recompense the baseless envy of this aunt of mine." (۱)

۵) The Consequence of Jealousy

Once, during the Caliphate of Mu'tasim 'Abbasi, a learned person arrived in his court.

Mu'tasim was so impressed with his talks and speeches that he ordered him to come to the court every few days. The man used to come regularly and before long became one of the confidants of the Caliph. Another of the Caliph's confidants became jealous of this person and fearing that he would take over his ministry, considered ways of getting rid of him.

One day, at the time of Dhuhr, as he was leaving the Caliph's gathering together with the learned person, he requested him to accompany him to his house

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۱- Pand-e-Tarikh, Volume ۲, Page ۱۵۶; I'lam al-Nas (of Atlidi), Page ۴۴

so that they could talk and have lunch together. The learned man accepted his .request

When they sat for lunch, garlic was also served with the food and the man consumed a lot of it. At the time of ‘Asr, the jealous person proceeded towards the Caliph and said: “As I am burdened by your favours and bounties, I cannot conceal this secret from you. This learned man who is your confidant, has been secretly complaining to the people that the foul odour from the Caliph’s mouth is killing him but the Caliph ”.repeatedly summons him to go to him

The Caliph was horrified to hear this and ordered the learned man to be brought before him. Since he had consumed a lot of garlic, he covered his mouth with a handkerchief and sat at a distance from the Caliph. Observing this, the Caliph became certain of the truthfulness of the minister’s words. He wrote a letter to one of his assistants instructing him to kill the bearer of that letter and he asked the learned .man to take it to the assistant

The jealous confidant was waiting outside the room. As soon as the man came out of the Caliph’s court with the letter in his hand, the confidant thought that the letter contained the Caliph’s orders for a large sum of money to be given to him, and this added fuel to his already flaming envy. He offered two thousand dirhams

to the man in return for the letter. The learned man accepted the money and also .accepted the confidant's request not to go to the Caliph for a few days

The jealous confidant took the letter to the Caliph's assistant who immediately beheaded him. Some days later, the Caliph enquired, "Where is the learned man? Has "?he gone on a journey

Those around him said, "No, we have seen him just recently." The Caliph ordered that he be brought before him. When he had arrived, the Caliph, with great astonishment, inquired: "I had given you a letter to hand over to my assistant, did you not do as "?instructed

.The man recounted the incident of the letter and the jealous minister

The Caliph said, "I shall ask you a question; do not lie. Did you tell my confidant that the foul odour from the Caliph's mouth troubled you?" The learned man replied in the .negative

Why then did you sit away from me when you last came to see me and covered your" .mouth with a handkerchief?" asked the astounded Caliph

Your confidant had taken me to his house and fed me garlic and so when I arrived in" .your presence, I feared lest the odour should inconvenience you," replied the man

Hearing this, the Caliph uttered, "Allahu Akbar!" and then related the whole incident to those present around him. All of them were left astonished and amazed.(۱)

Truth and Falsehood .۳۲

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

قُلْ جَآءَ الْحَقُّ وَ

زَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ اِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوْقاً

And say: The truth has come and the falsehood has vanished; surely falsehood is a“ (vanishing (thing).”(1)

:Imam ‘Ali (as) said

ظَلَمَ الْحَقَّ مَنْ نَصَرَ الْبَاطِلَ.

(One, who helps falsehood, has oppressed (and done injustice to) the truth.”(2)“

Short Expalantion

There are several levels to comprehending truth and falsehood, and individuals differ vastly with respect to acceptance and rejection of them. The general rule, with regards to the truth, is that the heart should be inclined towards Allah, His commandments and the realities, while the rule with regards to falsehood, is that the heart should be averse to things that are prohibited and related to other than Allah, .and the interior should be kept away from dirty and impure carnal attachments

A pious person comprehends that falsehood weans a person away from realities and it shall cease to exist, and it is only truth, which is deep-rooted and continues to exist. Thus, one must adhere to the people of truth and stay away from the people of .falsehood

The Right of a Deceased Muslim (1

Zurarah relates: I was in the company of Imam Baqir (as) in the funeral procession of a person from Quraish. ‘Ata, the jurist of Makkah, was amongst those present in the funeral procession. Suddenly, the air was filled with the wailing of a lady. ‘Ata instructed her to remain quiet as otherwise he would have to turn back. But the lady .continued to wail and so ‘Ata left the procession

I informed the Imam (as) about ‘Ata’s turning

۱- Noble Qur’an, Suratul Isra (۱۷), Verse ۸۱

۲- Ghurar al-Hikam, Tradition ۶۰۴۱

.back

.(Why?" inquired the Imam (as"

I replied, "Due to the lamentation of a lady. He asked her to keep quiet and when she ".did not, he left

Imam Baqir (as) said, "Stay with me and we shall accompany the deceased. If we notice falsehood together with the truth and forsake the truth due to that falsehood, we would not have fulfilled the right of the Muslim." i.e. escorting the funeral of the Muslim, which is his right, should not be forsaken for the sake of the wailing of that .(lady (which, according to the non-Shi'ite sects, is forbidden and prohibited

When the prayers were offered for the dead person, his relative said to the Imam (as): "May Allah have mercy upon you! You can turn back for you do not possess the .strength to walk." Imam (as) continued to accompany the funeral procession

Zurarah continues: I said to Imam Baqir (as), "The relative of the deceased has ".permitted you to turn back

If you have some work, you may go," said the Imam (as). "I have neither come here" with his permission nor do I need his permission to return. I have come here to seek the rewards, since man shall be rewarded in the measure in which he accompanies a (funeral procession." (۱

Mua`wiyah Ibn Yazid (۲

After the three-year Caliphate of Yazid (who brought about the murder of Imam Husain (as)), the lootings and crimes in Madinah and sacrilege with respect to the .Ka'bah, the Caliphate reached his son Mua'wiyah

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Ba Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Konim, Page ۵۵; Al-Kafi, Volume ۳, Page ۱۷۱ -۱

Whenever Mua’wiyah slept at night, two slave-girls would remain awake, one near .his head while the other near his feet, in order to protect him from inconveniences

One night, thinking that the Caliph was asleep, the slave-girls began conversing with .each other

The Caliph likes me more than you and if he does not set his eyes upon me three“ times a day, he gets restless and disturbed,” the one that sat near the Caliph’s head .said

.Hell is the abode for both of you,” commented the other slave-girl“

Not being able to sleep, Mua’wiyah heard the conversation. Predictably, he felt the urge to get up and put the slave-girl to death, but he controlled himself and waited to .hear more of their dialogue

The first slave-girl wanted to know why the second one had made that remark. She got the following reply: “Mua’wiyah and Yazid, the grandfather and father of this Mua’wiyah, were the usurpers of the Caliphate, since the rank was the right and ”.(privilege of the household of the Noble Prophet (S

When Mua’wiyah heard this, he drifted into deep reflection and finally made up his .mind to step down from the false Caliphate and inform the people of the true leader

The next morning he ordered all the people to be present in the mosque. When the mosque was full, he ascended the pulpit and after praising Allah, said: “O’ People! The Caliphate is the right of Imam Sajjad (as) whereas my grandfather, my father and I

".were its usurpers

He descended from the pulpit, returned to his house, locked himself in and refused to allow anyone to enter it. When his mother was informed of the incident, she .approached him, beating her head with her hands

Oh! How I wish that you had been the blood of my monthly cycle so that I might not" .have had to witness such an act from you!" she shouted

Mua'wiyah remarked, "By Allah! I wish I had been just what you desired so that you "!had never given birth to me

For forty days he did not emerge from his house. In the meantime, Marwan Ibn Hakam took over the reins of the Caliphate. Marwan then married Mua'wiyah's)mother (Yazid's wife) and a few days later he had Mua'wiyah poisoned.(۱

Accepting the Truth (۳

One night, Sa'id Ibn Musayyab entered the mosque of the Noble Prophet (S) wherein he observed a person offering prayers. He was reciting them in a loud and beautiful voice. Sa'id instructed his slave to go to the person and request him to recite his .prayers softly

.The mosque is not our property; this person has a right over it too," the slave said"

Sa'id decided to do it himself. He called out in a loud voice: "O' Worshipper! If you are offering your prayers for Allah, then lower your voice, but if you are offering it for the ".people, (then do realize) they shall not benefit you in the least

The person, appreciating the truth in

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, Volume ۹, Page ۱۵۴; Jame' al-Nurain, Page ۳۱۶ -۱

this advice, lowered his voice and recited the remainder of the prayers in a low voice. As soon as he had completed his prayers, he picked up his shoes and left the mosque. After he had left, it transpired that the person was 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz, the ruler of (Madinah.(١

The Intoxicated turns Grateful (۴

Dhunnun Misri relates: "I had come out of Egypt for a walk and was strolling along the banks of the river Nile gazing at its water, when I suddenly caught glimpse of a scorpion moving forward hastily. I wondered where it was heading. As it reached the riverbank, a frog surfaced from within the water; the scorpion climbed onto its back and the frog began to swim through the water. "There is something mysterious about this event," I thought to myself. I jumped into the water and began to swim after .them

I observed that when the frog had reached land, the scorpion got down from his back. I continued to follow the scorpion till I reached a tree. There, I found a youth lying in its shade. Beside him was a black snake that was about to bite him. Suddenly, the .scorpion rushed forward and stung the snake in the back. The snake died instantly

After this, the scorpion proceeded towards the water, climbed onto the frog's back .and was ferried to the other side. I stood absolutely amazed

This person is surely one of the auliya (close"

Shanidani-ha-e-Tarikh, Page ۱۸; Mahajjatul Baid'a, Volume ۲, Page ۲۳۰ -۱

friends) of Allah!" I whispered. I was about to kiss his feet when I realized that the man was intoxicated, and this only served to add to my amazement. I waited patiently for the youth to recover from his drunken state and when he regained consciousness, .he saw me standing near him

O' one, who is the leader of his time! You have come near this sinner and honoured" .him," he exclaimed in astonishment

I told him to leave aside the rhetoric but to look at the snake beside him. Seeing the snake near him, he slapped his forehead and inquired what had happened. I related to him the entire incident of the scorpion, frog and the snake. On hearing about this and observing the grace of Allah upon him, he raised his head towards the heaven and cried: "O' You! If Your grace upon the intoxicated ones is in such measure, how "?much would it be upon (Your) friends

Then, after performing ablution in the Nile, he turned towards his house. From then on, he engaged himself in self-rectification, till he reached such a stage and rank that (every sick person for whom he prayed would become cured."(١

The Gratitude of Abu Dharr (۵

When Abu Dharr received the news that a Prophet had manifested himself in Makkah, .he instructed his brother Anis to go and acquire some information about him

.His brother went to Makkah, came back and described the Noble Prophet (S) to him

You have"

Jawame' al-Hikayat, Page ۴۶; Siyar as-Salihin -١

not been able to smother the flames that smolder within my heart," Abu Dharr .complained

He therefore made arrangements to undertake a journey to Makkah. On his arrival there, he took shelter in one corner of a mosque till on the third day, under the .guidance of 'Ali (as), he covertly approached the Noble Prophet (S) and greeted him

When the Noble Prophet (S) asked him his name and inquired about him, Abu Dharr .gave him the answers, following which he accepted Islam

The Noble Prophet (S) advised him: "Return to your city and do not stay in Makkah for ".(I fear that you might be subjected to persecution (here

By He, in Whose Hand lies my soul! I shall shout out in front of the people and loudly" .proclaim my acceptance of Islam," responded Abu Dharr

He headed straight towards Masjidul Haram where in a loud voice, he testified to the Unity of Allah and the Prophethood of the Noble Prophet (S). Hearing this, the people of Makkah rushed towards him to beat him up till he dropped down, unconscious. As 'Abbas, the paternal uncle of the Noble Prophet (S) witnessed the scene, he threw himself upon Abu Dharr and shouted out to the people: "O' People! Woe unto you! Do you not see that this person is from the tribe of Ghaffar and was amidst you while on .a journey towards Syria?" With these words, he managed to save Abu Dharr's life

The next

day, his condition improved but Abu Dharr again proclaimed his new faith and was badly beaten up once more. For the second time in as many days, 'Abbas intervened and saved him from their beatings. After this, Abu Dharr left Makkah and returned to his city.(١)

٣٣. Lawful and Unlawful

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الأَرْضِ حَلاَلاً طَيِّباً

"O mankind! eat the lawful and good things out of what is in the earth."(٢)

Imam Kadhim (as) said:

إِنَّ الْحَرَامَ لاَ يُنْمِي وَ إِنْ نُمِيَ لَمْ يُبَارَكْ فِيهِ.

"Surely, the unlawful things do not grow (and multiply) and if they ever do, they are never blessed."(٣)

Short Expalantion

Consumption of lawful things results in soundness of health and a good Hereafter, whereas consumption of unlawful things causes hardening of the heart - the gravest of diseases for the heart. Its ill effects are also seen to manifest in one's progeny and even becomes cause for a person to stand up in opposition to Allah! The Prophets and the auliya never ate unlawful things and always counseled their ummah to earn a lawful income and desist from unlawful things.

Why should one who shall eventually be in need of only a grave and a few meters of shroud strive to collect wealth by unlawful means only to leave it for the others, not to mention its burden and responsibility?

In regards to earning a lawful income, it has been reported from the Noble Prophet (S) that worship consists of

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Paighambar Wa Yaran, Volume ۱, Page ۴۵; A'yan al-Shi'a, Page ۳۱۶ -۱

Noble Qur'an, Suratul Baqarah (۲), Verse ۱۶۸ -۲

Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۲, Page ۱۶۷ -۳

seventy parts, the most excellent of them being the earning of a lawful income. The act of earning a lawful income causes a person's heart to become illuminated, his acts of worship to be accepted, and the person finds himself in the continuous protection of Allah.(١)

The Jews and the Unlawful Food (١

When the Noble Prophet (S) was seven years of age, the Jews (having perceived signs of Prophethood in him and therefore deciding to test him) discussed amongst themselves: "We have read in our Scriptures that the Prophet will distance himself from unlawful and dubious food, so let us test him."

Thus, they stole a fowl and gifted it to Abu Talib so that the members of his family could eat it. All of them ate, except for the Noble Prophet (S) who did not touch the food. When questioned, he replied: "This fowl is unlawful and Allah has protected me from unlawful things."

After this incident, the Jews got hold of a neighbour's fowl with the intention of paying him later and sent it to Abu Talib, but once again the Noble Prophet (S) refused to eat the food, saying: "This food is dubious (with respect to its lawfulness)."

When the Jews came to know of these incidents, they commented, "This child shall come to possess a lofty rank and status."(٢)

By Unlawful Means (٢

During the period when Imam Baqir (as) was in the captivity of Mansur Dawaniqi (the second 'Abbasid Caliph), he used to eat very little food. Once, a righteous lady who was the follower of the

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١- Safinatul Bihar, Volume ١, Page ٢٩٧

٢- Dars-hai Az Zindagi-e-Payambar, Page ٣١; Biharul Anwar, Volume ١٥, Page ٣٣٦

Ahlul Bayt prepared two loaves of bread by lawful means and sent it to the Imam (as) so that he could eat them. The jail warden said to Imam (as): "A certain pious lady, who happens to be your follower has sent these loaves as a present for you and has ".sworn that it has been made out of lawful means and has requested you to eat them

The Imam (as) refused to accept the loaves and asked for them to be returned to the .lady

Tell her: We know that your food is lawful; however, since you have made it reach us " (by unlawful means, it does not befit us to eat it," he said.(۱

The Satan's Snare (۳

One of the students of Ayatullah Sheikh Murtad'a Ansari recounts: "One night, while we were in Najaf engaged in studies under the tutelage of the Sheikh, I saw Shaitan in .my dreams. He was armed with numerous ropes and cords in his hands

.What are these ropes for?" I asked him"

He replied, "I put them around people's necks, draw them towards myself and ensnare them. Just last night, I had put one of these strong cords around the Sheikh's neck and had managed to drag him from his room to the middle of the street in which his house is situated, but unfortunately he escaped from my clutches and returned ".home

The next morning when I went to the Sheikh, I related the previous night's dream to .him

Shaitan has spoken the truth," the Sheikh"

Lataif al-Tawaif, Page ۴۴ -۱

explained. “That accursed had desired to beguile me but by the grace of Allah, I escaped from his grasp. Yesterday, I did not have any money to purchase something for the house. I said to myself: ‘I have one riyal from the money of Imam al-Zaman (as) and there is still some time before I can put it to use. I shall borrow it for now and repay it later.’

“I left the house with that money, but as I was about to purchase the item which I needed, I said to myself: “How do I know I shall be able to repay this debt later?” I wavered and then all of a sudden decided against going ahead with the purchase. As soon as I returned home, I put the money back in its place.”(۱)

۴) The Caliph’s Food

Once, in a gathering of Harun Rashid (the fifth ‘Abbasid Caliph), which included a number of aristocrats, the conversation drifted towards Buhul and his insanity.

When it was time for lunch, a king’s luncheon was spread out, and a delicacy especially prepared for Harun was placed before him. Harun handed this food to one of his slaves and ordered him to take the food to Buhul, in the hope of drawing him towards himself with this benevolent act.

When the slave brought the food before Buhul, who was seated in the ruins of a broken down house, he noticed that some dogs nearby were tearing apart and eating the carcass

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۱- Sima-e-Farzanegan, Page ۴۳۰; Zindagani Wa Shakhsiyyat-e-Sheikh Ansari, Page ۸۸

.of a dead donkey. Buhul refused to accept the food

.Place the food before the dogs," he said to the slave"

This is the Caliph's special food and he has sent it to you out of his respect for you. Do" .not insult the Caliph!" ordered the slave

Buhul responded, "Lower your voice for if the dogs come to know of this, even they would refuse to eat this food." (Since, with regards to the riches at the Caliph's (disposal, it is not known which part of it is lawful and which part is not.)(١

Aqil' (۵

Once, 'Aqil, the brother of Imam 'Ali (as), seeking some monetary help, asked the .Imam (as) to give him something because he was poor

The Imam (as) said, "Be patient till I distribute the money amongst the other Muslims ".for then, I shall give you your share too

But when 'Aqil persisted with his request, the Imam (as) said to a person: "Take 'Aqil by the hand towards the market and ask him to force open the lock of one of the "!shops and take away everything from it

"?Aqil immediately asked, "You want me to be arrested as a thief'

And by giving you money from the public treasury of the Muslims you want me to be" .looked upon as a thief?" the Imam (as) retorted

.I shall go to Mua'wiyah," replied 'Aqil"

Imam 'Ali (as) suggested to him to do as he pleased. 'Aqil went to Mua'wiyah to seek help from him whereupon Mua'wiyah gave him a hundred thousand

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Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani, Volume ۱, Page ۱۲۰ -۱

dirhams and said: “Ascend the pulpit and inform the people as to how ‘Ali (as) behaved with you and how I cooperated with you.”

Aqil climbed up the pulpit and, after thanking and praising Allah, said: “O’ People!‘ When I sought from ‘Ali (as) his religion, he abandoned me - his brother, and adhered to his religion. However, when I approached Mua’wiyah, he gave me preference over his religion.”(١)

٣۴. Forbearance

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيْمَ لَحلِيْمٌ اَوَّاهٌ مُّنِيبٌ

“Most surely Ibrahim was forbearing, tender-hearted, oft-returning (to Allah).”(٢)

Imam Sadiq (as) had said:

إِذَا لَــــمْ تَكُنْ حَلِيماً فَتَحَلَّمْ

“If you are not forbearing then portray yourself as one possessing forbearance.”(٣)

Short Expalantion

Forbearance is Allah’s lantern from the illumination of which a person achieves the proximity of Allah. A forbearing person, in the face of ill treatment by his family, friends and other people, exhibits patience for the sake of divine pleasure. The reality of forbearance is when a person, despite having the power and ability to extract revenge, pardons the person who has caused him harm and injury; we read in the supplications: “O’ Lord! Your grace is (too) expansive and Your forbearance is (too) immense that You should punish me for my deeds and disgrace me for my sins.”

Since the significance of a true believer more than anyone else, thus, it is imperative for him to exhibit forbearance in the face of troubles and inconveniences of the foolish ones, for if he were to stand up in confrontation with

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۱- Pand-e-Tarikh, Volume ۱, Page ۱۸۰; Al-Sawaiqul Muhriqah

۲- Noble Qur'an, Surat Hud (۱۱), Verse ۷۵

۳- Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۱, Page ۲۹۷

them, it would be tantamount to adding fuel to the fire and only serve to aggravate the issue.(۱)

۱) The Nuisances of the Pigeon-Fancier

Sheikh Abu 'Ali Thaqafi had a neighbour who loved pigeons. His pigeons would perch on the roof of the Sheikh's house and in order to make them fly away, he would fling stones at them, an act that caused disturbance and inconvenience to the Sheikh.

One day, the Sheikh was sitting in his house reciting the Noble Qur'an, when the neighbour hurled a stone at the pigeons. The stone struck the Sheikh on his forehead, injuring him and causing blood to flow down his forehead.

The Sheikh's companions were overjoyed and spoke amongst themselves: "Tomorrow, the Sheikh is bound to complain to the governor of the city and we shall soon be relieved of the pigeon-fancier's nuisance."

The Sheikh summoned his servant and instructed him to bring a long branch of a tree. When the slave had brought the branch, the Sheikh said to him: "Now take this branch to the pigeon-fancier and ask him not to throw stones but to use this instead to make the pigeons fly."(۲)

۲) Tolerance Towards the Commander's Deeds

While Hisham Ibn Isma`il (the maternal uncle of 'Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan) was the governor of Madinah, having been appointed by Yazid, he used to harass Imam Sajjad (as) immensely. When he was dismissed from the post, Walid took his place, ordered him to be arrested and placed him in custody so that all those people who had grievances against him could come forward

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۱- Tadhkeratul Haqaiq, Page ۵۴

۲- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, Volume ۴, Page ۳۶۸

.and seek compensation

Hisham said, “I do not fear anyone except ‘Ali Ibn al-Husain (as).” This fear was because he had subjected the Imam (as) to enormous troubles.

However, the Imam (as) had instructed some of the individuals known to him (and who had had a hand in Hisham’s arrest) not to cause any harm to him, even by using a bad word. He even sent a message to Hisham stating: “Listen, if you are unable to pay the money which they have imposed upon you as penalty and punishment, we can arrange to have it paid for you. Rest assured! You need not be worried, either with respect to us or with respect to our followers.”

When Hisham realised the Imam’s civility and courteousness towards him in spite of his improper conduct, he recited aloud(۱): “Allah knows best where He places His message.”(۲)

۳) Qais Minqari

A narrator says: “I learnt to practice forbearance from Qais Ibn ‘Asim Minqari. Once, I watched him preaching and exhorting the people as he leaned on his sword in front of his house. In the course of his preaching, I observed that some people came to him with a dead body together with a person whose hands were tied.

“This is your nephew and he has killed your son,” they said to Qais.

The narrator continues: “By Allah! Qais neither discontinued his speech nor did he get up from his place. Instead, he continued till his speech finished, after which, he

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۱- Noble Qur’an, Suratul An’am (۶), Verse ۱۲۴

۲- Ba Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Konim, Page ۲۲; Tarikh Tabari, Volume ۸, Page ۶۱

turned to his nephew and said: "O' Nephew! You have committed an evil deed, disobeyed your Lord, severed your relationship, used your weapon to your own detriment and dishonoured the people of your tribe!"

Then, turning to his other son, he said: "Untie the hands of your cousin, bury your brother and give your mother, from my property, a hundred camels as blood money for the death of your brother, for she comes from a different family."(۱)

۴) Imam Hasan and the Syrian

One day, Imam Hasan (as) was sitting in his place when he was confronted by a man who had come from Syria. As soon as the man set his eyes upon the Imam (as), he began to curse and revile him; but the Imam (as) remained silent till he had completed his outburst.

When he had stopped, the Imam (as) turned towards him, greeted him, smiled and then said: "Brother! You seem to be a stranger here and you have apparently made a mistake. If you want me to disregard your behaviour and forgive you, I shall do so; if you seek something from me, I shall grant it to you; if you want me to guide you, I shall do so; if you are hungry, I shall feed you; if you are in need of clothes, I shall provide them to you; if you are needy, I shall give you all that you need; if you have been expelled, I shall grant you shelter and if you have

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۱- Payghambar Wa Yaran, Volume ۵, Page ۱۸۰; Asad al-Ghabbah, Volume ۴, Page ۲۲۹

a desire, I shall fulfill it for you. If you can be my guest for the duration of your stay ".here, it would be to your benefit, since my house is large and contains all amenities

Hearing these words of Imam Hasan (as), the man burst into tears and said: "I bear witness that you are Allah's Caliph upon the earth and Allah knows best where He places His message and caliphate. Before this meeting of ours, I regarded you and your father as my greatest enemies amongst the people, but now you are the most ".beloved of them all for me

The man stayed with Imam Hasan (as) as his guest for the entire duration of his stay (in Madinah and eventually became one of the sincere followers of the Ahlul Bayt.(١

Sheikh Ja'far Kashif al-Ghita (۵

Sheikh Kashif al-Ghita was one of those illustrious scholars who were known to .possess a high degree of forbearance

One day, the Sheikh distributed some money amongst the impoverished people of the city of Isfahan after which he began to lead the congregational prayers. Between the two prayers, when the people were engaged in reciting their supplications, a poor sayyid(٢) entered the mosque, stood before the Sheikh and shouted rudely: "O' ".Sheikh! Hand over the money of my grandfather (khums) to me

.You have arrived late; unfortunately, I have nothing left with me," the Sheikh replied"

!The sayyid, with great impertinence, spat on his beard

Instead of reacting violently, the Sheikh spread out his cloak and began to walk

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Muntahal A'mal, Volume ١, Page ٢٢٢ -١

(.A descendant of the Noble Prophet . (Tr -٢

amidst the rows of people, saying, “Whoever loves and respects the Sheikh’s beard, should help this sayyid.” The people, having witnessed what had transpired between the two, immediately obeyed and very soon the Sheikh’s cloak was filled with money. He handed all the money to the sayyid and proceeded to lead the congregation for (the ‘Asr prayers.(١

Modesty .٣۵

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّ ذٰلِكُمْ كَانَ يُؤْذِى النَّبِىَّ فَيَسْـتَحْيِى مِنْكُمْ وَ اللّٰهُ لاَ يَسْتَحْـــيِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ

Such (behaviour) annoys the Prophet: he is ashamed to dismiss you, but Allah is not“ (ashamed (to tell you) the truth.”(٢

:The Noble Prophet (S) said

أَلْحَياءُ خَيْرٌ كُلُّهُ

(Every kind of modesty is goodness.”(٣“

Short Expalantion

Modesty is a luminosity, the essence of which is faith, and therefore, modesty stems .from faith and ought to be strengthened by means of it

A person who possesses modesty enjoys every kind of goodness – restraining himself in the face of every repugnant and impure act - but one who lacks modesty and shame, acquires every kind of evil, although he may appear to engage himself in acts of worship. A person who lacks this virtue shall be left deprived (of mercy) and will be afflicted with the punishment of the Hereafter. Modesty, in the initial stage, .’transforms into ‘fear of Allah’, while in the final stage, into ‘perception of Allah

A person who is in possession of this virtue, is heedful of Allah, distant from sins and (disobediences, and cloaked with honour and love.(۴

Musa and the Daughters of Shu'aib (1

When Musa (as) killed the person from

p: 100

Seema-e-Farzanegan, Page 338; Fawaid al-Rad'awiyyah, Page 74 -1

Noble Qur'an, Suratul Ahzab (33), Verse 53 -2

Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume 2, Page 385 -3

Tadhkeratul Haqaiq, Page 93 -4

Qabt, the followers of Fir’awn schemed to have him murdered, and so he fled from Egypt. After travelling for between three and eight days and enduring great troubles, he reached the city of Madyan, where he stretched out to rest beneath a tree situated .near a well

He realized that there were two ladies standing near the well, waiting for the shepherds to finish drawing water so they too could draw water from the well. He went to them and offered to help by drawing the water for them. As a result of Musa’s help, the women brought the water home sooner than usual and this prompted their father, Sho’aib (as) to inquire: “How did you manage to bring the water sooner than ”?usual today

They narrated to him the entire episode, whereupon Sho’aib said, “Go to the man and ”.bring him to me in order that I may reward him for his act

The ladies approached Musa (as). As soon as they conveyed their father’s message to him, he immediately agreed, as he was hungry, tired and a stranger in the place. The maidens led the way while Musa (as) followed them, but as they walked, the outlines of their bodies became visible and this appeared unsuitable to Musa’s modesty (to look at). Consequently, he said to them: “I shall lead the way while you follow up behind me; correct me if you find me heading in the wrong direction (or throw pebbles before me so that I

".know where to go) for we, the children of Ya'qub, do not look at the backs of women

When the ladies approached Sho'aib (as) and related the incident to him, he gave his daughter in marriage to Musa (as), owing to the latter's assistance, modesty, purity, (trustworthiness and physical strength.(۱

The Modesty of the Eyes (۲

It has been related in the commentary Ruhul Bayan that in a city there lived three brothers. The eldest brother had been the muezzin of the mosque in the city and used to recite the adhan from the top of its minaret. After extending his services for ten years, he died and the second brother took over his brother's task. A few years later, this brother died too and so, the people approached the third brother and urged him to accept this responsibility and not to let the sound of adhan be terminated. But he .flatly refused

.We shall give you a large amount of money!" they said to him"

But he replied, "Even if you were to give me a hundred times more, I would not accept ".this task

.Is the recitation of adhan an evil act?" they asked him"

".No, but I shall not recite it from the top of the minaret"

When they sought to know the reason for his refusal, he said, "This minaret is a place that has caused my two wretched brothers to die without faith. I was near my eldest brother when he was breathing his last and I desired to recite the

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Tarikh-e-Anbiya, Volume ۲, Page ۶۵-۷۱ -۱

.Surat Yasin to ease the agony of his death, but he prohibited me from reciting it

The second brother too departed from the world in the same manner. In order to“ know the reason for this problem, Allah graced me and I saw my eldest brother in my dream, in a state of chastisement. I said to him: ‘I shall not leave you till you tell me what caused both of you to die without faith?’ He said: ‘Whenever we ascended the minaret, we would look at the womenfolk in the people’s houses, without shame and modesty. This act of ours used to engage our hearts and occupy our thoughts, leaving us neglectful and heedless of Allah, and this is what has caused us to become (wretched and earned for us an evil Hereafter.’”(١

Zulaikha (٣

When Zulaikha followed Yusuf to gratify herself and proposed to commit the sin, .Yusuf suddenly observed that she had covered something with a piece of cloth

.What did you do?” he asked her“

I have covered the face of the idol so that it does not watch me while I commit the“ .sin,” she replied

Hearing this, Yusuf said, “(If) you exhibit shyness and modesty before a stone that does not see, it is more befitting for me to exhibit shame and modesty before the One, Who sees and Who is aware of what is manifest about me and what is concealed (within me.”(٢

The Modesty of Amirul Mo’minin (۴

The marriage formula between Imam ‘Ali (as) and Hadhrat

Riwayat-ha Wa Hikayat-ha, Page ١٠۵; Dastan-ha-e-Parakandeh, Volume ١, Page -١ ١٢٣

Namunah-e-Ma’arif, Volume ۴, Page ٣٨۵; Bahrul Mahajjah (of Ghazzali), Page ٩۴ -٢

Zahra (as) had been recited in the year ٢ ah, but the wedding ceremony took place .(only later (after one month or one year, as per varying reports

During this period, ‘Ali (as), out of shyness, would not utter the name of Fatimah (as) .and she too behaved likewise

This continued till one day, the wives of the Noble Prophet (S) approached ‘Ali (as) and asked: “Why do you delay the wedding ceremony? If you experience a feeling of shyness and timidity, permit us to speak to the Noble Prophet (S) about it.” Imam ‘Ali .(as) granted them permission

.(En masse, they arrived in the presence of the Noble Prophet (S

O’ Prophet of Allah!” they said. “Had Khadijah been alive, Fatimah’s wedding“ ceremony would have left her overjoyed and Fatimah (as) herself would be happy to set her eyes upon her husband. ‘Ali (as) too awaits his wife and we look forward to this ”.joyous occasion

Hearing Khadijah’s name, tears welled up in the Noble Prophet’s eyes. With a heave of sigh, he said, “Where is there the like of Khadijah...?” and then added, “But why did ”?‘Ali (as) not approach me directly for this

”.The wives replied, “His modesty restrained him from doing so

Hearing this, the Noble Prophet (S) directed them to make preparations for the (wedding ceremony.(١

Fear .٣۶

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَادْعُوْهُ خَوْفاً وَّ طَمَعاً

(And call on Him fearing and hoping.”(٢“

:The Noble Prophet (S) has said

أَتَمُّكُمْ عَقْلاً أَشَدُّكُمْ خَوْفاً

The most perfect and complete“

p: ۱۰۴

Fatimah al-Zahra, Page ۲۸۳ -۱

Noble Qur’an, Suratul A’raf (۷), Verse ۵۶ -۲

(from amongst you in intellect is the one who is most fearful amongst you (of Allah)."(١)

Short Expalantion

Fear of Allah is the sentinel of the heart; this is because a fearful person, by means of fear, remains mindful of Divine pleasure and soars to lofty heights. He witnesses the Divine threats and warnings, and thus refrains from deeds that are dictated by carnal and base desires.

A person who worships Allah out of His fear never gets deviated and eventually reaches his goal and objective. How can he afford not to be fearful especially since he does not possess knowledge of what his final outcome would be and is unaware if his Book of Deeds would be light or heavy?

A fearful person finds himself torn between two fears - fear of the past and that of the future. Fear serves to suppress one's (reckless) soul and when a person's soul is suppressed with respect to carnal and capricious desires, his heart comes to life. This leads to steadfastness, which eventually prepares the ground for the heart to develop hope and become hopeful (of divine mercy).(٢)

1) The Fearful Youth

Salman Farsi was passing through the blacksmiths' market of Kufah when he observed that a crowd had gathered around a youth who lay on the ground, senseless. When the people saw Salman, they requested him to recite a supplication so that the youth could come out of his unconsciousness.

As soon as Salman came closer, the youth got up and said: "There is nothing

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١- Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ١, Page ٢٢۵

٢- Tadhkeratul Haqaiq, Page ٨٣

wrong with me. It is just that I was passing through this market when I noticed the blacksmiths striking metal with their iron hammer and this made me recall what Allah has said in the Qur'an: "In addition there will be maces of iron (to punish) them."(1) As this verse crossed my mind, I was overcome by this state."

Salman became interested in the youth, grew fond of him and made him his brother. They were always friends with each other till one day the youth fell ill and was almost on the verge of dying. Salman sat down near his head and then, addressing Izra'eel, said: "O' Izra'eel! Be tolerant and lenient towards my young brother and be kind and gentle to him!"

"O' Servant of Allah! I am the friend of all the believers and kind to them all," Izra`il replied.(2)

2) The Mute Language of the Stone

It has been reported that once in the course of his journey, one of the Prophets came across a small stone and observed that a large quantity of water flowed out from it. As the incident left him greatly astonished, Allah made speech come out from the stone, which said: "Ever since I heard that men and stones would be the fuel of the fire of Hell, I have been in a state of weeping (out of fear that I should be one of those stones)."

The stone then requested the Prophet to pray that it should remain protected from the fire (of

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1- لَهُم مَقَامِعُ مِن حَدِيد (Noble Qur'an, Suratul Hajj (22), Verse 21)

2- Dastan-e-Jawanan, Page 94

.Hell) and the Prophet, acceding to his request, prayed for it

It so happened that after a period, the Prophet again passed by that place and, witnessing that the water still continued to flow from the stone as before, inquired: "?"What is it that makes you weep now

The stone replied, "Before I could be satisfied of my deliverance from the fire (of Hell), my tears were out of fear, but now, I weep out of thanksgiving and due to joy and (happiness."(١)

Punishment by Fire (٣

Once, Amirul Mo'minin (as) was in the company of his companions when a person approached him and said: "O' Amirul Mo'minin (as)! Purify me for I have committed ".sodomy with a boy

Go home for you appear to have been affected by bile or melancholia," advised the" .(Imam (as

The next day the person turned up again and confessed to his dirty act but the Imam (as) repeated what he had previously stated. The third day too he confessed and again Imam 'Ali (as) repeated his earlier advice. When the man arrived on the fourth day and confessed to his crime, the Imam (as) said: "Now that you have confessed four times, choose one of the three punishments, which the Noble Prophet (S) has stipulated for this act – to be beheaded by means of a sword, to be hurled down from ".a height or to be burned with your hands and feet tied

.Which of these three punishments would be the severest for me?" the man asked"

".Burning by fire"

Shanidani-ha-e Tarikh, Page ٣٨٨; Mahajjatul Baid'a, Volume ٧, Page ١۴٢ -١

".O' 'Ali! (as), I choose this punishment"

The Imam (as) told him to prepare for it. The man got up, offered a two-rak'at prayer and supplicated: "O' Lord! I have committed sin and You are aware of it. Fearing Your wrath, I have approached the successor and the cousin of the Noble Prophet (S) and have asked him to purify me of it. He asked me to choose one of the three punishments and I have chosen the most severe one. O' Lord! I plead to You by Your mercy to make my burning in this world an expiation for my sin and not to burn me in "!the Hereafter

Having said this, he got up, began to weep and then hurled himself into the pit of roaring flames. The Imam (as) began to weep when he saw this and so did his companions; then he said in a loud voice: "O' Man! Rise from within the fire for you have caused the angels to weep. Allah has accepted your repentance. Rise and "!henceforth do not conduct such an act

It is reported in another tradition that a person asked 'Ali (as), "O' Amirul Mo'minin "?(as)! Do you invalidate the punishment of Allah

Imam 'Ali (as) replied, "Woe unto you! Whenever there exists an Imam appointed by (Allah and a sinner repents for his sin, it is upon Allah to forgive him."(۱

The Fearful Ones (۴

When the verse: "And surely Hell is the promised place of

Dastan-ha-e-Zindagi-e-'Ali (as), Page ۵۱; Qadhawat-ha-e-Muhayyir al-'Uqul -۱

them all. It has seven gates; for every gate there shall be a separate party of them"(1) was revealed to the Noble Prophet (S), he wept so intensely that it made his companions weep too, but none knew what it was that Jibra`il had revealed which .had made the Noble Prophet (S) wail in such a fashion

One of the companions went to Fatimah (as) and informed her of the incident. Covering herself with her cloak, which was patched in twelve places by means of date palm leaves, she came out of the house. When Salman Farsi's eyes fell upon the cloak, he looked at it in amazement and then, bursting into tears, said to himself: "The emperors of Rome and Iran attire themselves in silken and gold-embroidered clothes "!but the daughter of the Noble Prophet (S) covers herself with such a cloak

When Fatimah (as) came to the Noble Prophet (S), he said to Salman: "My daughter belongs to a group that has taken great precedence in subservience and obedience ".((to Allah

"?Fatimah (as) then asked, "Father! What was it that made you grieve

The Noble Prophet (S) recited the verses which had been brought by Jibra`il. The mention of Hell and the punishment of the fire left her so distraught that her knees failed to hold her weight and she collapsed onto the floor saying, "Woe unto he who ".enters the fire

O' I wish I had been a sheep that was eaten and my skin had"

١- وَ إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوعِدُهُم اَجمَعِينَ لهَاَ سَبعَهُ اَبواَبٍ لِكُلّ بَابٍ مِنهُم جُزْءٌ مَقسُومٌ (,Noble Qur'an, Suratul Hijr (١٥ (Verse ۴٣-۴۴

been torn apart so that I would never have had to hear of the fire of Hell," uttered .Salman

O' I wish my mother had never given birth to me so that I would never have heard of" .the Hell-fire," said Abu Dharr

I wish I was a bird in the desert so that I would not have had Reckoning nor" .punishment, and would not have heard of the fire of Hell," muttered Miqdad

Amirul Mo'minin (as) said, "I wish the wild animals had torn me into pieces and my mother had not given birth to me so that I would not have had to hear of the Hell-fire." Then, placing his hand upon his head, he began to cry and wailed, "Oh! How distant is the journey of the Day of Judgment! Woe to those who did not make provision for the Day of Judgement. In this journey of the Day of Judgment, they shall be led towards the fire; O' the sick ones, who shall be in the binds of captivity and whose injuries shall never be treated. None shall step forward to untie them; fire shall be their food and (water, and they shall be turned upside down in the various stations of Hell."(١

Yahya (۵

When Prophet Yahya (as) observed the clerics of Baytul Maqdas wearing veils made of haircloth and headgears of cotton, he requested his mother to make a similar dress .for him. Later, he began worshipping with them in Baytul Maqdas

(One day, Yahya (as

Pand-e-Tarikh, Volume ۴, Page ۲۲۱; Biharul Anwar, Volume ۱۰, Page ۲۶ -۱

looked at his body, which had become considerably thin, and began to weep. Allah revealed to him: "You cry over your body that has thinned down? By My Glory and Majesty! Had you possessed the slightest knowledge of the fire (of Hell), you would have worn overcoats made of iron, not these woven clothes." Hearing this, Yahya .wept to such an extent that the flesh of his cheeks became worn out

Zakariyya (as) said to his son, "I had sought you from Allah so that you could be the "?apple of my eyes. Why do you behave in such a manner

Father, but was it not you who had said: 'Surely, between Paradise and Hell there lies" a pass and none except those who cry immensely due to fear of Allah, shall be able to .traverse it'," Yahya replied

.(Yes, I did!," admitted Zakariyya (as"

Whenever Zakariyya (as) intended to preach and exhort the Bani Isra`il, he would first look around him, and if he noticed Yahya (as) amongst them, he would refrain from mentioning anything about Paradise and Hell. Once, Zakariyya (as) was engaged in delivering a sermon to the people when Yahya (as), his head covered with his cloak, arrived and sat down amongst the people. Zakariyya (as), who had not noticed Yahya (as), preached: "Allah has said: 'In Hell there is a mountain by the name of Sakaran alongside which there lies a desert by the name of Ghadhaban, in which there is a

well whose depth is equivalent to one hundred years of travel. Within this well, there exist caskets of fire and within these caskets lie chests of fire, which in turn contain ".clothes and chains of fire

As soon as Yahya (as) heard the name 'Sakaran', he raised his head, shrieked and in a state of utter distress and disturbance, rushed out and headed towards the .wilderness

Zakariyya and Yahya's mother set off in search of him; some of the youths of Bani Isra`il too, out of respect for Yahya's mother joined them in their search. They came .across a shepherd and asked him if he had seen a youth with Yahya's description

.Are you looking for Yahya Ibn Zakariyya?" inquired the shepherd"

.Yes," they replied"

He is presently in a particular place with his feet in the water and his eyes glued" .towards the heavens, praying and communicating with his Lord," he explained

The search party went to that place and located him. Calling Yahya (as) towards herself, his mother placed him under the oath of Allah and requested him to return (home. Soon, Yahya (as) returned home with his mother.(١

Treachery .٣٧

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ یُحِبُّ مَنْ کَانَ خَوَّاناً أَثِیماً

(Surely Allah does not love him who is treacherous, sinful."(٢"

:Imam Sadiq (as) said

لَیْسَ لَکَ أَنْ تَأْتَمِنَ الْخَائِنَ

(It is not for you to trust a treacherous person.”(۳“

Short Expalantion

If a thing such as money, a business, a car or the like is placed as trust in one’s possession, one should

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Risalah Liqaullah, Page ۱۵۷-۱۶۴; Amali of al-Saduq -۱

Noble Qur’an, Suratul Nisa (۴), Verse ۱۰۷ -۲

Biharul Anwar, Volume ۷۸, Page ۲۴۸ -۳

.not be unfaithful to it, spoil or disfigure it or deny having received it as a trust

A person with this vice does not have credibility neither in the eyes of Allah nor in the eyes of the people. He drops down from the level of faith and the (evil) reaction of his .deed rebounds – affecting him, his wealth and his family in a detrimental way

It has been strongly advised that one should not be deceived by a person's (prolonged) prayers and (numerous) fasts - for it is possible that the person may have simply become fond of performing these acts – instead, one should test a person for .(truthfulness, and faithfulness with respect to the trusts (placed in his custody

One should never place a trust in the possession of an unfaithful person. Lending money or giving one's daughter in marriage to a treacherous person is disapproved and if one does so and then happens to suffer loss or harm, it is only himself that he .should censure and rebuke

The Treacherous Minister (۱

During his reign, Gushtasp had a minister by the name of Rast Rawishan(۱). As a result of this prestigious name, Gushtasp held him in high esteem and favored him over the .other ministers

This minister exhorted Gushtasp into oppressing the subjects and confiscating their property in the belief that the orderliness of the kingdom's affairs was dependent upon the treasury and that the subjects ought to be poor in order that they remained subservient and obedient. He himself

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.'Literally, his name means 'a truthful worker -۱

had not only accumulated a lot of wealth but had come to harbour animosity towards .Gushtasp

One day, when Gushtasp came to the treasury, he realised that there was no money to pay his workers. Furthermore, his cities were falling into ruin and the people were .in distress. This left Gushtasp in a state of bewilderment

Out of sheer despair, he climbed onto his horse and set off into the wilderness. As he wandered, his eyes fell upon a flock of sheep in the distance. When he came nearer, he observed that the sheep were sleeping while a dog lay suspended from the gallows. In astonishment, he asked the shepherd the reason for killing the dog. The shepherd replied: "This dog was a loyal animal; I nurtured him and trusted him to protect the sheep. After a period, he came in contact with a she-wolf and both became friends. When night fell, the she-wolf would take hold of a sheep, eat half of .it, and leave the other half for the dog

One day, I noticed a decrease in the number of sheep and after investigation, came" to know of the dog's treachery. Therefore, I hung him up on the gallows so that it is "!known that the consequence of treachery and evil is torture and punishment

Hearing this, Gushtasp thought to himself, "My subjects are like these sheep and I am like the shepherd; I must investigate and study the condition of the people

".so that I know the cause for their deplorable state

He returned to his court and asked for the list of prisoners who were locked in his prisons. Studying the list, he concluded that his minister, Rast Rawishan, had imprisoned all of them and that he was the cause of all the evils and troubles. He had .the minister hanged and admitted to himself that he had been deceived by his name

Gradually he made the kingdom prosperous, rectified the past damages, paid attention to the state of the captives and refrained from trusting anyone, ever (again.(١

Treachery during Ziarat (٢

Al-Hajj Hasan, the son of Ayatullah al-Hajj Husain Tabataba`i Qummi, relates: "I had come to Tehran from Mashhad for the treatment of my eyes. During that time, one of the traders of Tehran who was known to me, had travelled to Khurasan for the ziarat .(of Imam Rid'a (as

One night, I dreamt that I was in the sanctuary of Imam Rid'a (as) who was seated on the sepulcher. Suddenly, I observed that the trader shot an arrow at the Imam (as) which greatly troubled him. For the second time, from another direction of the sepulcher, he let fly another arrow towards the Imam (as) and again the Imam (as) was deeply troubled. The third time, the trader shot an arrow from behind but on this occasion, the Imam (as) collapsed on his back. Shocked and petrified, I woke up from .my sleep

When my eye

Jawame' al-Hikayat, Page ٣١٣; Siyasatnameh-e-Khwajah Nidham al-Mulk -١

treatment was completed, I wished to go back to Khorasan but then decided to stay on till the trader returned from Khorasan. When he returned, I spoke to him and asked him certain questions but could not get to the bottom of the matter. Eventually, I narrated my dream to him, whereupon, with tears flowing from his eyes, he explained: "One day, having entered the sanctuary of Imam Rid'a (as), I noticed that before me stood a lady with her hand placed on the sepulcher. I placed my hand on hers and so the lady went to the other side of the sepulcher. I followed her there and once again placed my hand on hers. This time, the lady went behind the sepulcher. When she had placed her hand upon it, I did exactly the same as before and asked her where she was from. She replied that she was from Tehran; we became friends and returned to Tehran together."(۱)

The Daughter's Disloyalty towards the Father (۳

Satrun, whose title was Dhizan was the king of Hadhar, a state located between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates. In Hadhar, there was a beautiful palace by the name of Jausaq.

Once, the king attacked a city that was under the control of Shapur; looting and plundering it, he massacred a great number of its people and eventually occupied it. In the process he managed to take Shapur's sister as captive.

When Shapur came to know of this, he gathered his army and set out

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۱- Rahnama-e-Sa'adat, Volume ۱, Page ۲۵۷; Jame' al-Durar, Volume ۱, Page ۴۴۸

towards the king. Dhizan had locked himself inside a strong fort which Shapur laid siege to. This siege continued for a period of four years but Shapur was unable to .penetrate the fort

One day, Dhizan's daughter, Nadhirah, an extremely beautiful maiden, was strolling outside the fort when Shapur's eyes fell on her. He was instantly captivated by her beauty. He sent word to her that if she helped him conquer the fort, he would marry her. During one of the nights, Nadhirah, who too had fallen for Shapur, got the guards of the fort intoxicated and opened its doors to Shapur's forces. In the battle that .ensued, her father Dhizan was eventually killed

In keeping with his promise, Shapur married Nadhira. One night he noticed that there was blood on her bed. As he set about to investigate the cause of it, he observed that a strand of thick hair lay on her bed and this had caused her delicate and subtle body .to become scratched and injured

.What did your father feed you with?" he asked her"

.Yolk of eggs, brain of lambs, butter and honey," she replied"

:When he heard this, Shapur reflected for a while and then said

Despite these comforts provided by your father, you were not loyal to him; how can" "?you ever be loyal and faithful to me

He ordered that she be tied to a horse's tail and the animal made to gallop through the desert so that the desert thorns

(become coloured by the blood of this treacherous and unfaithful daughter.(۱)

The Indian and the Sixth Imam (۴

Imam Kadhim (as) narrates: "One day, I was with my father in the house when a friend entered and told my father that some people were standing outside, waiting to see him. My father asked me to find out who they were. As I went outside, I saw numerous camels laden with chests and a man seated on a horse.

"Who are you?" I asked the man.

"I am from India and seek the honour of meeting the Imam (as)," he replied.

I returned to my father and informed him about the man outside.

"Don't let this impure and treacherous person enter the house," he instructed, and so I did as I was told. The people pitched their tents at that very place near the house and waited for a long time till Yazid Ibn Sulaiman and Muhammad Ibn Sulaiman intervened and procured permission for them to meet my father.

When the Indian entered, he sat down before the Imam (as) with folded knees and said: "May you have good health! I am from India and the king has sent me with some presents which are to be handed over to you. For several days I have been seeking permission to enter but you have

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Namunah-e-Ma'arif, Volume ۵, Page ۱۴۲, Al-Mustatraf, Volume ۱, Page ۲۱۰ -۱

been refusing to meet me. Do the Prophets’ children conduct themselves in this ”?manner

My father (as) lowered his head and answered, “You will come to know the reason for it later.” He then asked me to open the letter that the Indian had brought. In the letter, the king of India had extended his greetings. Then he had written: “It is because of you that I have been guided aright. I had been presented with an extremely beautiful slave-girl, and I found none, save you who could be worthy of possessing her and so, in addition to some clothes, ornaments and perfumes, I gift her to you. Out of one thousand persons, I selected one hundred, and from them, I selected ten and from the ten, I have short listed one person, Mizan Ibn Khabbab, who is trustworthy. I send ”.him to you together with the slave-girl and the presents

My father turned to the Indian and said, “O’ Unfaithful person! Turn back, for I shall ”.never accept a trust that has been subjected to unfaithfulness

The Indian swore that he had not been unfaithful, however my father told him, “If your clothes were to testify that you had been unfaithful with respect to the slave-girl, ”?would you become a Muslim

.Do forgive me!” implored Mizan“

”.Then write your deeds to the king of India“

.If you know something in connection with the issue, you write it down,” said Mizan“

The man had a sheepskin over his

.shoulder; the Imam (as) told him to place it on the ground

My father then offered a two-rak’at prayer after which he went into prostration and :supplicated

أَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّی أَسْـئَـلُکَ بِمَعَاقِدِ الْعِزِّ... إِیْمَانَاً مَعَ إِیْمَانِهِمْ

:then raising his head, he turned towards the sheepskin and said

”.Speak out all that you know about this Indian“

:The sheepskin began to speak as if it were a sheep, and said

O’ Son of the Prophet of Allah! The king considered this person to be trustworthy and“ had laid great emphasis with regards to protecting the slave-girl and the gifts. When we had travelled some distance, we reached a desert where heavy rains lashed us. All our belongings had become soaked due to the rain. A short while later the clouds cleared away and the sun began to shine. At that point, this unfaithful person called out to the servant, who had been accompanying the slave-girl, and dispatched him towards the city to purchase something. When the servant had gone, he said to the slave-girl: “Enter into this tent which we have pitched beneath the sun so that your clothes and body dry up. The slave-girl entered the tent and pulled up her clothes up to her calves. As soon as his eyes fell upon her legs, he became mesmerized and ”.persuaded the slave-girl into being unfaithful

The Indian, disturbed and distressed at witnessing the sheepskin (speaking out his misdeed), confessed to his misdemeanour and sought forgiveness. The

sheepskin returned to its original state and the Imam (as) ordered him to put it on. As soon as the Indian had placed it over his shoulder, it encircled and tightened itself around his neck and the man was almost on the verge of being strangulated when the Imam (as) said: "O' Sheepskin! Leave him so that he can return to the king who would be the most appropriate person to punish this man for his unfaithfulness."

The sheepskin reverted back to its original state. The Indian, overcome with fright, implored the Imam (as) to accept the gifts.

"If you become a Muslim, I shall gift the slave-girl to you," said the Imam (as).

But he declined the offer. The Imam (as) then accepted the presents, but refused to take the slave-girl, and the man returned to India.

After a month, a letter arrived from the king of India, in which, after extending his greetings he wrote: "You accepted that which did not have any significant value, whereas rejected that which was valuable. This left me greatly disturbed and I said to myself: 'The children of the Prophets possess divine insight and wisdom and it is possible that the person who had escorted the slave-girl, might have exhibited unfaithfulness.' And so, I wrote a letter in your name to myself, and said to the man that your letter had reached me in which you had mentioned his unfaithfulness. I said to him: 'Nothing,

except the truth, can save you', whereupon he confessed and related to me the entire episode of his unfaithfulness with regards to the slave-girl and the incident of the sheepskin. The slave-girl also confessed and so I ordered both of them to be .beheaded

I bear witness to the Unity of Allah and the Prophethood of the Noble Prophet (S) and" ".have to state that I shall personally arrive in your presence later

Before long, he arrived in Madinah after having abdicated his kingship and (transformed himself into a true Muslim.(١

The World .٣٨

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ ما الْحَیاهُ الدُّنْیاَ إِلاَّ لَعِبٌ وَّ لَهْوٌ

(And this world's life is naught but a play and an idle sport."(٢"

:The Noble Prophet (S) stated

مَنْ أَصبَحَ وَ الدُّنْیاَ أَکْبَرُ هَمِّهِ فَلَیْسَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ فِی شَیْءٍ

He who rises in the morning such that his greatest concern is for (the issues of) the" (world, shall have nothing of (the guardianship) of Allah."(٣

Short Expalantion

The world is like a figure whose head is pride; its eyes, greed; its ears, covetousness; its tongue, dissimulation; its hands, lust; its legs, vanity and its heart, heedlessness. Whoever loves the world, will be dragged by it towards arrogance and pride; whoever likes the world, will be made greedy by it towards itself and whoever desires the .world, will be hauled by it towards covetousness

A person who has praised the world has cloaked himself with the garment of

dissimulation; one whose goal and objective is this world, his heart

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۱- Pand-e-Tarikh, Volume ۱, Page ۲۱۷; Biharul Anwar, Volume ۱۱, Page ۱۳۶

۲- Noble Qur'an, Suratul An'am (۶), Verse ۳۲

۳- Jame' al-Sa'adat, Volume ۲, Page ۲۴

gets filled with vanity, and one who trusts this world, is overcome by negligence and heedlessness (with respect to Allah). Consequently, Hell shall be the abode of the (worldly people.(۱

Esteem and Humiliation (۱

Harun Rashid, the 'Abbasid Caliph, was very fond of the Barmaki family. They were his close and special companions, generally occupying ministerial posts, and from amongst them, he was particularly fond of Ja'far Barmaki. This mutual respect and esteem continued for over ۱۷ years. In ۱۸۹ ah, due to certain events, the Barmaki family became the object of Harun's wrath and consequently, all of them went .through very difficult times

Muhammad Ibn 'Abdul Rahman Hashmi narrates: "On the day of 'Eidul Adha, I approached my mother who was having a conversation with a lady dressed in old .clothes

.Do you recognize this lady?" my mother asked me. I said I did not"

.This is `Ubadah, the mother of Ja'far Barmaki," she said"

I moved towards 'Ubadah and spoke to her for sometime, all the while experiencing .astonishment over the state she was in

.O' My Mother! What have you seen of the wonders of the world?" I asked her"

Ubadah replied, "O' Son! I have experienced a day of 'Eid, similar to this day ('Eidul' Adha), when I had four hundred slave-girls standing before me at my service and (yet) I used to complain that my son Ja'far had not granted me my right (fully) for I .should have had more slave-girls serving me

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Tadhkeratul Haqaiq, Page ۳۵ -۱

Today is another day of ‘Eid but I am now faced with a situation in which the only things I require are two sheepskins - one for use as a mattress and the other for use ”.as a blanket

Muhammad Hashmi continued: “I gave her five hundred dirhams, which made her so happy that she almost died of delight. ‘Ubadah kept coming to our house periodically, (till she eventually passed away.”(۱

Imam ‘Ali and the Public Treasury (۲

Shu’bi narrates: “Accompanying the other youths, I too entered the vast open ground of Kufah where I saw Amirul Mo’minin (as) holding a small whip in his hand and standing near two containers filled with gold and silver coins. He used the whip to .keep back the huge crowd that had gathered whilst he was distributing the money

The Imam (as) continued to distribute the money till there was nothing left for himself, .and he returned home empty-handed at which point, I went home too

I have witnessed a very strange thing today and I fail to comprehend if this person’s“ act was good or bad, in that he never retained anything for himself!” I said to my .father

My father inquired as to what I was talking about. I narrated to him all that I had witnessed, whereupon my father, bursting out in tears, said to me: “Son, you have just (watched the most excellent person from amongst all the people.” (۲

Zadhan reports: “Qambar and I set off see Amirul Mo’minin (as). When we reached ’him, Qambar said: “O

Tatimmah al-Muntaha, Page ۱۸۱ -۱

Al-Gharat, Volume ۱, Page ۵۵; Dastan-hai Az Zindagi ‘Ali , Page ۱۱۴ -۲

".Amirul Mo'minin! Arise, for I have concealed a significant treasure for you

.(What is the treasure?" inquired the Imam (as"

.Arise and accompany me in order that I show it to you," insisted Qambar"

The Imam (as) got up and followed him into the house. Qambar brought out a linen .bag, which was full of small sacs containing gold and silver coins

O' Ali! I know that you distribute everything amongst the people and never retain" .anything for yourself and so, I have saved this especially for you!" said Qambar

Imam (as) remarked, "I would have preferred you to set this house on fire and burn down everything." As he said this, he struck the bag with his sword, causing the gold and silver coins to fall out. He then ordered us to distribute the coins among the people. After we had carried out his instructions, the Imam (as) said: "Bear witness that I have not taken anything for myself and have not been negligent with respect to the distribution of money amongst the Muslims. O' Gold and Silver! Deceive someone (other than 'Ali."(١

Hadhrat Sulaiman (٣

Sulaiman Ibn Dawud (as) was one of those very few Prophets to whom Allah had granted sovereignty over the east and the west of the world. For years, he ruled over jinn, men, animals, birds and wild beasts, and knew the language of all creatures - an .authority so great and extensive that it was ineffable

:He had prayed to Allah

Dastan-hai Az Zindagi 'Ali □, Page ١٢٨; Nahjul Balagha (Ibn Abil Hadid), Volume ٨, -١ Page ١٨١

”.Grant me a kingdom the like of which You shall never grant to anyone after me“

After Allah had graced and honoured him with such a kingdom, Hadhrat Sulaiman (as) said to his servants one day: “I have not passed one single day, from morning to night, in a state of happiness. Tomorrow I shall enter my palace, climb onto its roof and view my subjects. Do not permit anyone to approach me lest my happiness should turn into ”.sadness

The next morning, taking hold of his staff, he climbed to the uppermost portion of his palace and stood there, leaning upon his staff, observing his kingdom and subjects, and experiencing joy over what Allah had granted to him. As he was looking around, he suddenly noticed a good-looking youth, dressed in clean clothes, appearing from .one corner of his palace

.Who granted you permission to enter the palace?” he asked the youth“

.The Lord,” replied the youth“

.(Who are you?” asked Sulaiman (as“

”.Izra`il“

”?Why have you come“

”.To seize your soul, Sulaiman“

I had wanted today to be my day of happiness but Allah desired otherwise; comply“ .(with the orders given to you,” said Sulaiman (as

Izra`il seized his soul while he stood leaning on his staff while the people, looking at .him from afar, thought him to be alive

When time passed, there arose a controversy amongst the people. Some said, “It has been several days that he has not eaten or drunk anything and so he is our Allah.” Another

group said, "He is a sorcerer; he has made it to appear to us that he stands, whereas, in reality, it is not so." A third group said, "He is a Prophet of Allah."

Allah sent an army of ants to eat through his staff as a result of which, the staff broke and Sulaiman collapsed. It was then that the people realized that he had passed away several days before.(۱)

۴) Talhah And Zubair's Love for the World

Talhah and Zubair had been of the elders during the initial phase of Islam and had extended fitting contributions in the battles. After the death of the Noble Prophet (S), both of them, and Zubair in particular, vehemently supported Amirul Mo'minin (as) and never hesitated in offering their assistance to him.

Their support continued till 'Uthman was murdered and the people selected Imam 'Ali (as) as their leader. When this happened, these two approached Imam (as) and formally requested him to appoint them as governors of some cities.

However, when they encountered a negative reply from Imam 'Ali (as), they conveyed a harsh message to him through Muhammad Ibn Talhah, which said: "We have had to make a lot of sacrifices for the sake of your Caliphate and now that you have the reins of power in your hand, you act as a dictator, bringing to the fore the likes of Malik Ashtar and pushing us into the background?!"

Imam 'Ali (as) sent a message through Muhammad Ibn Talhah saying: "What should I do in order that you may

۱- Hayat al-Qulub, Volume ۱, Page ۳۷۰

"?be pleased

"Appoint one of us as the governor of Basrah and the other as the governor of Kufah," they replied.

"By Allah! When I do not consider them to be trustworthy here in this place (Madinah), how can I place them over the people of Basrah and Kufah?" asked Imam 'Ali (as).

He then instructed Muhammad Ibn Talhah to go and tell them: "O' Sheikhs! Fear Allah and His Prophet with respect to the ummah of the Noble Prophet (S) and do not oppress the Muslims; have you not heard Allah say: "(As for) that future abode, We assign it to those who have no desire to exalt themselves in the earth nor to make mischief and the good end is for those who guard (against evil)."(١)

Having failed to realize their ambitions of power and riches, Talhah and Zubair decided to go to Makkah. They approached Imam 'Ali (as) to seek his permission to go to Makkah for performing the 'Umrah. The Imam (as) told them that they did not really intend to perform the 'Umrah, but they swore that they had no other motive and were firm and faithful in their pledge of allegiance.

Upon the Imam's orders, they renewed their pledge with him and then set out for Makkah. There, they broke their pledge, raised an army and in the company of 'Aishah, set out towards Basrah for the Battle of the Camel! On the way, they met Ya'li Ibn Munabbah, who carried with him

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١- Noble Qur'an, Suratul Qasas (٢٨), Verse ٨٣

.approximately four hundred thousand dinars for Imam 'Ali (as) from Yemen

The two men forcefully took away the money from him and utilized it for fighting the .(Imam (as

In this battle (۳۶ ah), thirteen thousand soldiers from the army of Talhah and Zubair and five thousand soldiers from Imam 'Ali's (as) army were killed. Talhah was eventually killed by an arrow shot by Marwan, who belonged to his own army. After killing him, Marwan declared: "I have extracted revenge of 'Uthman's blood from ".Talhah

Zubair withdrew from the battle and was murdered on the way by Ibn Jurmuz. The consequence of their penchant for power and proclivity towards worldly desires was (nothing but an ignominious death.(۱

!What he Desired and What Eventually Happened (۵

On the ۲۳rd of Muharram, ۱۶۹ ah, Mahdi 'Abbasi died in Masabdhan and the caliphate passed on to his son Musa, titled Hadi 'Abbasi, who at that time, had gone to Jorjan to (fight the people of Tabaristan.(۲

Harun Rashid, his brother, took the pledge of allegiance for him from the people of Masabdhan and Baghdad and sent a message to inform him of the situation. Hadi .quickly returned to the capital

Harthamah Ibn A'ayun recounts: "One night, Hadi 'Abbasi summoned me to a private .meeting with him

Do you know how disturbed I am because of this infidel dog Yahya Ibn Khalid? He" has turned the people against me and is coaxing them to support Harun. You must go to the prison immediately and behead him," he said. "Then

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Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani, Volume ۳, Page ۲۰; Tarikh-e-Ya'qubi, Volume ۲, Page ۱۶۹ -۱

۲- Tr) Modern day Mazandaran.)

proceed to the house of Harun and murder him. After this, survey the prison and kill every person from the progeny of Abu Talib. When you have executed these instructions, prepare the army and proceed towards Kufah; once there, drive out all ”.the descendants of ‘Abbas from their houses and set their houses on fire

.Hearing these instructions, a shiver ran through me

.I do not have the strength to carry out these great and difficult tasks,” I pleaded“

If you exhibit negligence in obeying my orders, I shall kill you,” he said, and ordered“ .me to stand where I was whilst he went into the women’s quarters

I thought that since I had exhibited aversion towards these acts, he would assign them to someone else and then have me killed. I promised to myself that if I were delivered from this predicament, I would set off for a place where nobody would recognize me. Suddenly, a slave appeared and informed me that Hadi ‘Abbasi had summoned me. Anticipating death, I testified to the Unity of Allah and the Prophethood of the Noble Prophet (S) and advanced forward. Midway, I heard a lady speak out: “O’ Harthamah! I am Khaizran, Hadi’s mother. Come and see what calamity ”.has befallen us

As I entered the room, Khaizran, who was behind the curtains, said: “When Hadi entered the house, I moved aside the covering from my head and begged pardon for Harun, but he refused. At that moment

he was suddenly overcome by a fit of severe coughing. He drank some water but it did not help and he died there and then (١٨ Rabi' al-Awwal, ١٧٠ ah). Now go and inform Yahya Ibn Khalid of his death so that he can take the pledge of allegiance for my son ".Harun

Harthamah continues: "I informed Yahya of Hadi's death and then proceeded towards Harun's house, where I found him reciting the Noble Qur'an. I informed him that he had become the Caliph but he refused to believe it and so I narrated the entire incident to him. That very night, Harun was informed of the birth of his son, (Mamun."(١

Lies .٣٩

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

سَمَّاعُوْنَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَّالُونَ لِلسُّحْتِ

(They are) listeners of falsehood, devourers of what is forbidden."(٢)"

:Imam 'Askari (as) said

جُعِلَتِ الْخَبَائِثُ كُلُّهَا فِى بَيْتٍ وَ جُعِلَتْ مِفْتَاحَهَا الْكِذْبُ

(All the evils have been placed in a house and lies have been made its key."(٣"

Short Explanation

Speaking untruths - trivial or great, in jest or in seriousness - is not permitted since it has been said: "All the evils have been placed in a house and lies have been made its key", it becomes very important to abstain from this act.

Since lies refer to unrealities and one who utters lies, neither does so for the purpose of exaggerating his point nor for effecting reconciliation between two warring factions, it causes the angels to distance themselves from him. It brings about destruction of his faith, reduction in

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Rangarang, Volume ۱, Page ۲۴ -۱

Noble Qur’an, Suratul Ma`idah (۵), Verse ۴۲ -۲

Jame’ al-Sa’adat, Volume ۲, Page ۳۲۳ -۳

his livelihood, and humiliation and disgrace in the eyes of the people - to the extent that if untruths are ascribed to Allah and the Noble Prophet (S) in the month of (Ramadhan, it even results in the invalidation of fasts.(١)

Walid Ibn ‘Uqbah (١

Abi Mu’eet Walid Ibn ‘Uqbah was a Muslim who initially appeared to be such a righteous individual that the Noble Prophet (S) even assigned him the responsibility of collecting the zakat and sadaqat from the tribe of Bani Mustalaq. When the people of the tribe came to know of the arrival of a representative of the Noble Prophet (S), they .came forward to welcome him

During the Age of Ignorance, there had existed enmity between Walid and this tribe, and seeing the people come towards him in a large group, thought that they had .prepared themselves to kill him

.He quickly turned back and returned to Madinah

He went to the Noble Prophet (S), and told him that the people of the tribe were not .willing to pay their zakat, which obviously was not true

The Noble Prophet (S) was upset to hear this and made up his mind to despatch an army towards the tribe, when Allah revealed the following verse: “O you who believe! If an evil-doer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it(٢)(to ascertain the (veracity of it).”(٣

After the revelation of this verse, the liar Walid came to be recognized as a corrupt .person

He is of the inmates of Hell,” the“

١- Ihya al-Qulub, Page ١٥١

٢- Noble Qur’an, Suratul Hujarat (٤٩), Verse ٦ (يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا)

.Noble Prophet (S) said about him

Walid later teamed up with ‘Amr Ibn ‘As and the two would consume intoxicants and harboured feelings of animosity towards the Noble Prophet (S) and Amirul Mu’mineen .((as

The third caliph, during his caliphate, appointed him the governor of Kufah and one morning, in a state of intoxication, he led the morning congregational prayers by (performing four-rak’ats instead of the stipulated two.(١

Hunger and Lies (٢

Asma Bint ‘Umais, reported: “On the night of ‘Aishah’s marriage with the Noble Prophet (S), a few ladies and I were with her, dressing her up. When we went to the house of the Noble Prophet (S), we did not find any food except a single bowl of milk. He drank a little milk from it and then handed it to ‘Aishah. Overcome by bashfulness, .she did not take it

Do not refuse the Prophet of Allah; take the bowl and drink the milk,” I said to her.“ .Shyly, she took the bowl and drank some milk from it

Pass on the bowl to your companions in order that they may drink from it too,” the“ .Noble Prophet (S) instructed her

”.The ladies, who were with us, said, “We are not hungry

Hearing this, the Noble Prophet (S) remarked, “Do not gather hunger and lies together .(?(i.e. why do you lie while at the same time, you remain hungry

O’ Prophet of Allah! If we were to possess an appetite for something but we deny“ having it, would we have uttered a lie?” I

Ibid., Page ۶٨٨ -١

.inquired

A lie, even if trivial and insignificant, is recorded in the Book of Deeds," stated the"
(Noble Prophet (S).(١

The Lies of the Poet (٣

Khusro Hirawi was a contemporary of 'Abd al-Rahman Jami, and the following verse is his composition: "The flower of your face has watered the garden of beauty, and it ".has been the curls of your hair that have imparted the twists to the violets

It has been reported that he said: "My father, who had prepared food on the occasion of my circumcision, had utilized three hundred kilograms of powdered saffron." Those present around him asked him what food he had put such a large quantity of saffron .in

One hundred and twenty kilos in saffron-seasoned rice, ninety kilos in pea-soup," .thirty kilos in fricassee and thirty kilos in sweat-meat," he replied

This sums up to two hundred and seventy kilos; what about the other thirty kilos?" his" .companions pointed out

Bewildered, Khusro thought for a while after which he raised his head and lied with great exuberance: "I remember now. He used the final thirty kilos in 'quttab'!" (٢) and ((٣

Zainab the Great Liar (۴

During the caliphate of Mutawakkil 'Abbasi, a woman claimed that she was Zainab, .(the daughter of Fatimah Al-Zahra (as

Years have passed since the time of Zainab, but you appear to be young," said" .Mutawakkil to her

The Noble Prophet (S) caressed my head and prayed that every forty years I should" .become young again!" said the woman

,Mutawakkil called for the elders from the progeny of Abu Talib

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۱- Shanidani-ha-e-Tarikh, Page ۲۹۴; Mahajjatul Baid'a, Volume ۵, Page ۲۴۹

۲- Tr) A sweetmeat.)

۳- Lataif al-Tawaif, Page ۴۱۴

Abbas and the Quraish and placed the issue before them. All of them unanimously‘ .averred that the woman was lying because Zainab had died in the year ۶۲ ah

Zainab, the great liar retorted, “They are the ones who lie. I had concealed myself ”.from the people and none knew of my whereabouts until today

You must establish the falsity of her claims by means of proofs,” insisted Mutawakkil“ .to the elders

Ask Imam Hadi (as) to prove false her claims,” they advised. Mutawakkil called for the“ .Imam (as) and informed him of the issue

.(She lies, for Zainab had died in such and such year,” said the Imam (as“

.Present your evidence to prove false her claim,” Mutawwakil demanded“

The Imam (as) said, “The flesh of the children of Fatimah (as) is forbidden upon the ”!wild beasts; send her before the lions if she speaks the truth

.Mutawakkil turned to the woman for an answer

.In this way, he desires to kill me,” said the woman“

A number of people from the progeny of Fatimah (as) are present here. You can send “ .(whoever you desire (before the wild beasts),” responded the Imam (as

The narrator states: “The faces of all the sadat present in the gathering turned pale. ”?Some said, “Why does he not go himself instead of referring to others

Mutawakkil asked the Imam (as) why he himself was not going before the lions. The ,Imam (as) instantly agreed to go. Mutawakkil ordered for a ladder

and the Imam (as) entered into the enclosure where the lions were maintained. The wild beasts, in submission and humility, placed their heads on the ground before the Imam (as) and he in turn, caressed their heads. A little later he ordered them to move !aside and all of them obeyed

Mutawakkil's minister advised him, "Ask Imam Hadi (as) to come out immediately for ".if the people witness this miracle, all of them would flock to him

.The ladder was laid again and the Imam (as) climbed out

Whoever is of the children of Fatimah (as) should come forward and sit amongst the" .(wild beasts," proclaimed Imam Hadi (as

The woman (having witnessed the scene) admitted, "O' Imam! My claims are false. I am the daughter of a certain destitute, and poverty forced me to resort to this ".deception

Mutawakkil ordered his guards to throw the woman to the lions but his mother (intervened and interceded for Zainab who was then pardoned."(۱

The Plain Lie of Amir Husain (۵

Sultan Husain Bayaqra who ruled over Khorasan and Zabolistan, and Ya'qub Mirza who ruled over Azerbaijan, were friends who frequently sent letters and gifts to each .other

Once, Sultan Husain handed over some exquisite and valuable items to a person named Amir Husain Abyurdi and instructed him to pick the book 'Kulliyat Jami' from .the library and present it to Sultan Ya'qub Mirza along with the other items

Amir Husain approached the librarian and asked for the book, but the librarian ,erroneously handed him Muhyuddeen 'Arabi's book, Al-Futoohat Al-Makkiyyah

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Muntahal A'mal, Volume ۲, Page ۳۶۸ -۱

which greatly resembled the book Kulliyat Jami’ in size and volume. Amir Husain set out for Azerbaijan and arriving in Ya’qub Mirza’s presence, handed him Sultan .Husain’s letter and presents

After going through the contents of the letter, Ya’qub inquired after the health of Sultan Husain and the other ministers of the Sultanate. He then asked about Amir Husain’s health and with reference to the long two-month journey that Amir Husain had undertaken to reach him, he said: “You must surely have had a companion to ”.make your journey pleasant

Yes, I had in my possession the book ‘Kulliyat Jami’, which has been transcribed“ recently. Throughout the journey, I was engaged in reading it and thoroughly enjoyed .it,” replied Amir Husain

As soon as Ya’qub Mirza heard the name of Kulliyat Jami’, he said, “I had been desirous of this book and am extremely pleased that you have brought it.” Amir Husain sent one of his servants to bring the book and when it was brought, he handed it to Ya’qub Mirza. When Ya’qub Mirza opened the book, he observed that it was Al-Futoohat Al-Makkiyyah. He turned to Amir Husain and asked, “This is not Kulliyat Jami’ ”?- why did you lie

Amir Husain, embarrassed and ashamed, did not even wait to take the reply of the .letter, but immediately set out for Khorasan

When my lie had been exposed, I wished that I had died,” said Amir Husain later“ (on.(١

Theft .۴۰

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

أَلسَّارِقُ وَ السَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا

Khazinatul Jawahir, Page ۶۴۰; Tarikh Jaib al-Sair -۱

أَيْدِيَهُمَا

"And (as for) the man who steals and the woman who steals, cut off their hands."(1)

Imam Sadiq (as):

إِذَا سَرَقَ السَّارِقُ قُطِعَتْ يَدُهُ وَ غُرِمَ مَا أَخَذَ

"When a thief commits a theft, his hands are cut and he is made to indemnify what he has taken."(2)

Short Explanation

Denying the wife her dower, not repaying one's debts, not paying one's obligatory zakat and so on, are also examples of theft, but the meaning that immediately comes to mind upon hearing of theft, is 'taking into possession the property and wealth of others, secretly and deceptively'. This is the meaning which is actually intended here.

If there were to be no security (in the society), the people would be unable to sleep in peace for fear of thieves. It is for the purpose of establishing and maintaining security that Islam has ordered a thief's fingers to be severed; even if the act happens to be committed by a child, he has to be castigated in some manner, so that he desists from committing this evil act in the future.

It is due to the non-implementation of this Qur'anic ruling that an increasing number of thieves are found even in Islamic societies these days.

1) The Imam and the Thief's Confession

A person approached Imam 'Ali (as) and confessed that he had committed a theft.

"Are you able to recite something from the Noble Qur'an?" Imam (as) asked him.

"Yes, I know the chapter al-Baqarah," replied the man.

The Imam (as) said, "I forgive you because of the chapter al-Baqarah." Ash'ath Ibn Qais,

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Noble Qur'an, Suratul Maidah (۵), Verse ۳۸ -۱

Tafsirul Mu`in, Page ۱۱۴ -۲

who happened to witness this, asked the Imam (as) whether he could repeal a .punishment that had been stipulated by Allah

What do you know? If a person confesses to his crime, an Imam has the authority to" either punish him or pardon him, but if two persons testify to a person's crime, it is not (permissible to annul the punishment (and pardon him)," the Imam (as) retorted.(١

The Bedouin's Camel (٢

Sheikh Tawoos al-Haramain narrates: "I had been standing near Masjid al-Haram in Makkah when I witnessed a Bedouin advancing on his camel. When he reached the mosque, he dismounted, made his camel sit down, tied its two knees and then, raising his head towards the sky, implored: "O' Lord! I entrust unto You this camel and the load that lies upon it." Then he entered Masjid al-Haram. When he had circumambulated the Ka'bah and offered his prayers, he came out of the mosque and .found his camel missing. He looked up towards the sky

It has been said in the holy Shari'ah that property should be sought from one, unto" whom it has been placed as trust. I had entrusted my camel unto You, so return my .camel to me," he said

Hardly had he uttered these words when I observed that someone emerged from behind the mountain of Abu Qubais, with the rein of a camel in the left hand and the .right hand severed and suspended from his neck. He came close to the Bedouin

'O"

(Qadhawat-ha-e-Amirul Mo'minin, Page ١١٩ (authored by Tustari -١

.Youth! Take hold of your camel," he said

.Who are you and how did you land up in this state?" asked the Bedouin"

I was impoverished and needy and hence stole your camel," said the stranger. "I" went behind the mountain of Abu Qubais when I suddenly noticed a rider coming towards me. As he came closer to me, he shouted out: Bring your hand forward. When I had extended my hand, he severed it with a stroke of his sword and, hanging it on (my neck, said to me: Return this camel to its owner immediately." (۱

Buhul and the Thief (۳

Whenever Buhul happened to have money in excess of his expenses, he used to save it by concealing it in one corner of a ruined and broken down house; this continued till .the amount eventually reached a figure of three hundred dirhams

The next occasion when he had saved another ten dirhams and had gone to the place to add it to his concealed savings, a trader who lived in the neighbourhood, found out about the hideout. As soon as Buhul had left the hiding place, the neighbour dug up .the money that was concealed beneath the ground

The next time when Bulool came to the place, he found his money missing and immediately realized that it was the work of the trader. He decided to approach the .trader

I wish to trouble you by telling you about my secret," Buhul said to the trader. "I have"

Rahnama-e-Sa'adat, Volume ۲, Page ۲۷۲; Khulasatul Akhbar, Page ۵۲۶ -۱

placed my money in different places." Then he began enumerating the places till the entire figure reached three thousand dirhams. "The place where I have placed three hundred and ten dirhams is the safest of them all. I now wish to transfer all my money .to this place in the ruined house." Saying this, he bid the trader goodbye and left

The trader decided to return the three hundred and ten dirhams to the place from where he had stolen the money with the intention that when Buhul placed all his money there, he would steal the increased amount. Some days later, Buhul returned to the ruins and found the three hundred and ten dirhams in its original location. .Taking out the money, he defecated there and covered it with earth

Immediately after Buhul had left, the trader rushed towards the spot and, removing the earth, sought to collect the entire money, only to find his hand dirtied by the excrement. He thus comprehended Buhul's deception. A few days later Buhul visited .him

I want you to compute some figures associated with my money," said Buhul. "How" much does eighty dirhams added to fifty dirhams added to one hundred dirhams, and "?this sum added to the dirty odour that emanates from your hands, sum up to

Saying this, he took to his heels. The trader rushed after him in hot pursuit, but failed (to catch him.(۱

The Qur'an-Reciting Blind Thief (۴

Allam Ibn Al-Thaman says: "I was employed by a trader in'

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, Volume ۲, Page ۷۱; Khazain Naraqi -۱

Basrah when one day, I had to undertake a journey to 'Ubullah. I put five hundred dirhams in a bag and set out for the journey. I reached the banks of the river Tigris where I hired a boat. As I was passing by the region named Mismar, I noticed a blind person sitting by the riverbank, reciting the Qur'an. In a very sad voice, he called out: "O' Seaman! Take me in the boat for I fear that the animals might kill me at night." Initially the boatman refused but when I rebuked him, he consented. The blind man sat in the boat and continually recited the Qur'an from memory till we came near .'Ubullah, whereupon he stopped his recitation and began to disembark from the boat

All of a sudden, I realized that the trader's money, which had been given to me in trust, was missing. Both the boatman and the blind person removed their clothes to prove that they had not taken the money. I thought to myself, "The trader is bound to .kill me." Thousands of thoughts whirled in my mind and I began to weep and pray

As I walked towards 'Ubullah, a man came up to me and sought to know the reason .for my lamentations. I informed him of the theft of the trader's money

I shall show you a way (to extricate yourself from this problem)," he said. "Purchase" some good food, go to

the prison and plead to the prison warden to let you in. Inside the prison, go to Abu Bakr Naqqash and give him the food. He will inquire about your problem, and when he ".does so, narrate the entire story to him

I followed his instructions and when I had narrated my problem to Abu Bakr Naqqash, he said: "Now proceed towards the tribe of Bani Hilal and go to a certain house. Open the door and enter the house. There you will notice some handkerchiefs hanging behind the door. Tie one of them to your waist and sit down in a corner. A group of people will enter and engage themselves in consuming intoxicants; you should pick up a bowl too and after calling out, 'For the health of my (maternal) uncle, Abu Bakr Naqqash,' begin drinking from it. Upon hearing my name, they will inquire after my health. Pass this message to them: 'Yesterday, my nephew's money was stolen. Hand ".it back to him,' and they will hand over the money to you

I did as instructed and they too, without any protest, handed over the bag of money to me. I requested them to inform me as to how the theft had taken place. After great reluctance, one of them asked me if I recognised him. Looking closely at him, I realized he was the same blind man who had been reciting the Qur'an, while the

.other person was the boatman

One of our associates swims underwater behind the boat," he explained. "When the" Qur'an is recited, the traveller becomes so absorbed that he does not notice that we have thrown his money into the water. It is collected by the associate in the water and carried to the shore, to be distributed amongst ourselves when we gather together the next day. Today was the day for the distribution of the money, but since we have received orders from our chief, Abu Bakr Naqqash, we have returned the money to ".you

I took possession of the money and thanked Allah for having been delivered from this (quandary.(١

Jawame' al-Hikayat, Page ٣۵٧ -١

Part ۳

point

Moral stories from the lives of the prophets, the Ahlul Bayt and their companions. .Includes topics such as forgiveness, intellect, justice, and worship

Foreword

The concept of morality has existed since the creation of mankind. In the old days, there was a clear distinction betwin 'good' morals and 'bad' morals although people did not always follow the former. During modern times, the distinction betwin good and bad has become blurred and morality has been significantly diluted. As a result, .there is a danger that immorality will prevail over morality throughout the world

There is no excuse for a Muslim to get caught in this quagmire. There is clear guidance from Allah through Noble Qur`an and the Prophets and Masoomin. Prophet Muhammad (Prayers be upon him and his Family) himself said, "I have been sent for the purpose of perfecting morals." One of the best ways of understanding morality is .by studying practical examples from the lives of Prophets and Masoomin

A few books have been written on moral stories emanating from the Islamic world, one of them being 'Pearls of Wisdom', published by the Islamic Education Board of World Federation in March ۱۹۹۳. Bearing in mind the importance of the subject of Akhlaqiyat, IEB-WF is publishing 'Anecdotes for Reflection' in ۵ parts. The

source of this publication is the book 'Yaksad Mawzu' wa ۵۰۰ Dastan' by Sayyid 'Ali Akber Sadaqat. The translation from Farsi to English was carried out by Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi. IEB – WF would like to thank Sayyid 'Ali Akber Sadaqat and Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi for their efforts and we pray to Allah (swt) to reward them amply.

May Allah (Fri from Imperfections and Exalted is he) accept this work as a further attempt by IEB – WF to propagate Islam.

Islamic Education Board

The World Federation of K S I Muslim Communities

Dhil Hijjah, ۱۴۲۶ / January ۲۰۰۶

Introduction

There are numerous ways for man to achieve guidance and emerge from darkness and move towards light. Allah, for the prosperity of man and perfection of his morals, has created proofs, evidences and vestiges(۱) so great in number that they are beyond reckoning and computation. For the guidance of mankind, He sent the Prophets with Clear Proofs(۲), books, miracles and signs so that, perhaps, the people might perceive the right path and attain prosperity and success.

During the entire period of his prophethood, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), with regards to refinement of souls and perfection of morals, was an exemplar in speech and did, and had (even) said, "I have been sent (as a Prophet) for (the purpose of) perfecting the morals"(۳)

Man's problem lies in his disregard for virtues, acquisition of vices, inclination towards lust and obedience to the Shaytan. Some men stoop so low that they even lead their lives akin to animals. For the purpose of refinement and treatment of human morals, abatement of rebelliousness and controlling the natural disposition, the Noble Prophet spared no effort and mentioned all that was necessary in this regard.

Attainment of prosperity in this world and the hereafter is only accomplished under the auspices of a teacher and, at the same time, not every person can completely identify the two extremes of moral behaviour in order to demonstrate the moderate and balanced path. Allah, Who is the Absolute Wise, introduced all the Prophets, especially the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), as the 'teacher and trainer' of morals, so that the people, by following in his footsteps, distance themselves from vices and acquire the .honour of the two worlds

The Narratives), which) اَلقَصَص In the Qur`an, there exists a chapter by the name of .itself is proof that man is in nid of stories and narratives

In many places in the Qur`an, stories of Prophets, kings and nations have been mentioned. In addition, Allah has presented issues pertaining to wars, peace, family, religion, society and other similar topics, in the form of stories and narratives. By reading these accounts, the people can comprehend and distinguish the paths of .progress and regress, and ascent and descent in every field, especially morals

The entire chapter Yusuf has been devoted to the story of Yusuf, Yaqub, Zulaikha and the brothers. In the beginning of the Chapter, Allah says: "We narrate to you (O' Prophet) the most excellent of the narratives by (means of) what We have revealed to (you this Qur`an."(۴

While, in the concluding verse of this very chapter, He says: Indid (there) in the history (of theirs, is a lesson for men of understanding.(۵

Indid, one of the distinguished feats of the Qur`an is this very story of Yusuf (a.s), which it refers to as the 'best of the narratives', and at the end of which, it says: "In these stories there is a lesson for those, who desire to take a moral and adopt the ".path of the Perfect Men

In this regard, Amirul Mo`minin (a.s), in Nahjul Balagha, says to his son Imam Hasan (a.s) "Even though I have not reached the age, which those before me have, yet I have looked into their behaviour and reflected over the events of their lives. I walked amongst their ruins till I was as one of them. In fact, by virtue of those of their affairs

that have become known to me, it is as though I have lived with them from the first to the last. I have therefore been able to discern the impure from the clean and the benefit from the harm. I have selected for you the choicest of those matters and ”.collected for you their good points while kiping away from you the useless ones

Years ago, I had written a book on ethics (for the treatment of vices), by the name of Ihya al-Qulub. Ever since, I had been reflecting over the idea of compiling a book on moral stories. It so happened that, divinely, an opportunity came up before me and with it the motivation for undertaking this assignment. In spite of the lack of necessary books, I contented myself with those that were available and commenced .the compilation of this book, recording four to five stories for every topic

I have certainly not come across any book which has been compiled in this fashion. Books like Namunah-e-Maarif-e-Islam and Pand-e-Tarikh have been present for around ۳۰ years and I have made use of them too (in the course of this collection), but in those books, Qur`anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies have all been accumulated together; whereas, I have sought to satisfy myself by mentioning only the stories, while abstaining from presenting considerations relating to Qur`anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies, which would not only have increased the size of the book but would also have made it difficult to understand for many of the .readers

This collection caters for the general public, young and old alike, who are acquainted with basic reading and writing. As far as possible, I have endeavoured to omit scientific issues and those aspects, pertaining to traditions, whose comprehension .would be demanding and exacting for the general masses

Although some of the stories may not possibly possess any aspect of reality and actuality, what I have focused on is the admonition and 'taking-a-lesson' aspect contained in them, which hopefully, the honourable readers would perceive and .comprehend

As far as the issue of associating a story to a particular topic is concerned, I do not claim that the stories allude to just one topic or that particular one which has been

specified here; rather, there are stories which can be associated with several other .topics too, in addition to the topic under which it has been mentioned here

When narrating a text or presenting a translation, I have not restricted myself to the literal meaning but, for a better comprehension, have resorted to paraphrasing, .allusion and conceptual explanation too

To avoid interference of topics with one another and prolongation of discussion, I have refrained from bringing forth topics which are related to those already presented. For example, Ithar (altruism) has been presented as one of the topics but .Infaq (spending in the path of Allah) has been excluded

To prevent the reader from experiencing exhaustion and boredom, and for the sake of variety, I have desisted from presenting stories of a monotonous kind, like those of philosophers and poets, but have strived to make the collection varied. In this way, .the readers will, hopefully, derive a greater pleasure from the narratives

In view of the fact that trustworthiness ought to be adhered to, I have referred every narrative presented here, to the book from which it has been extracted, also mentioning the volume and page. It is only with the objective of achieving a greater fluency of work that I have endeavoured to correct, polish or alter some of the words .or sentences of the original text

It is hoped that the readers, after going through the stories and narratives, reflect upon and take lessons from them so that they are able to create within themselves, a new impetus towards perfection of morals; and Allah Willing, those who are endowed with laudable morals, should relate them to others, for rectification and remedy of the .weaker souls

Sayyid ‘Ali Akbar Sadaqat

:(And our final prayer (is

.All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds

[Mordad, ۱۳۷۸ [July ۱۹۹۹

Supplication .۴۱

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

أُدْعُونِـــى أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

(Call upon Me, I will answer you."(۶"

:Imam 'Ali (a.s) said

إِدْفَعُوا أَمْوَاجَ الْبَلاَءِ عَنْكُمْ بِالدُّعاَءِ قَبْلَ وُرُودِ الْبَلاَءِ.

Ward away, by means of supplication, the waves of misfortunes before the arrival of"
misfortunes (themselves)."(۷)۷

Short Explanation

The etiquette and conditions of supplication ought to be taken into regard and adhered to; the supplicant should carefully consider whom he is invoking and for .whom or what purpose, he is supplicating

The best of prayers is that man asks for obedience to Allah, drowning himself in His .love and entrusting all his affairs to Him

If Allah had not ordered us to supplicate and pray to him, but if we nevertheless had done so with sincerity, He, in His generosity, would have surely answered our prayers; accordingly, is it conceivable that the prayers of one, who adheres to the etiquette and conditions for supplication which Allah has prescribed, would not be ?answered

When one invokes Allah, He either grants him his desire immediately, sets aside for him something better than what he had desired for, or wards away from him a great (calamity.(۸

Imam Husain (a.s) narrates: “One dark night, my father and I were engaged in circumambulating the house of Allah when our attention was drawn towards a sound of weeping and lamentation. My father said to me: “O' Husain! Do you hear the wailings of a sinner, who has sought refuge in Allah? Locate him and bring him to me.”

In the darkness of the night I went in search of him; finding him betwin the Rukn and the Maqam, I brought him before my father.

He was a young man possessing an elegant stature and dressed in expensive clothes. My father said to him: “Who are you?” He replied: “I am an Arab”. My father inquired: “Why the wailing and lamentation?” He said: “Disobedience, sins and my father's curse have shattered my life and affected my health.”

He (a.s) asked: “What is your story?” The youth said: “I had a father who had become old and had been very loving and considerate towards me; however I always used to indulge in inappropriate acts. Try as much as he would to guide me, I would not mend my ways and, at times, even troubled and inconvenienced him.

One day I intended to take his money, which he had kept in his trunk, but coming to know of my scheme, he tried to stop me. In the ensuing meli I flung him to the ground; he attempted to rise but failed. I took the money and set about my way, but on the way out I heard him say: “This year I shall go to the house of Allah and curse you.”

For the next few days he engaged himself in prayers and fasts, and then started out for the holy Kaabah. I followed him and observed that taking hold of the Kaabah's curtain, he cursed me. He had hardly finished cursing me when I suddenly found that one side of my body had become numb and paralysed.” Having said this, the youth lifted his gown and pointed out his affliction.

He then continued: “I repented and sought his forgiveness. Thri years passed by and in the third year, during the season of Hajj, he agrid to pray for me. Together, we set off for Mecca and it was night when we reached the valley of Arak.” In the darkness of the night a large bird suddenly took off in flight and startled my father's camel as a

result of which my father was hurled to the ground and died. I buried him there but ".my affliction, due to my father's curse, still persists

The Imam (a.s) said: "The supplication recommended by the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), shall come to your aid. It contains the Greatest Name (of Allah) and every miserable, ".sick or poor person who recites it shall have his desire fulfilled

Giving him the supplication, he (a.s) said: "Recite this supplication on the eve of the ".۱۰th of Dhul Hijjah - the eve of Eidul Adha - and come to me the following morning

As instructed, the youth approached the Imam (a.s) having been completely cured of his affliction. The Imam (a.s) asked: "How were you cured?" He said: "I recited the supplication on the eve of the tenth of Dhul Hijjah - all the while shedding tears of repentance. Having completed the recitation, I was about to recite it for the second time when I heard a voice say: "O' Youth! Enough! You have invoked Allah by means of the Greatest Name." I fell into a slumber and witnessed the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) in my dreams. He (s.a.w) placed his hand upon my body and said: "You have been cured." "'.I woke up to find myself cured completely

The supplication which Imam 'Ali (a.s) had taught the youth was the supplication of (Mashlul, the initial sentences of which are as follows:(۹

أَللّٰهُمَّ إِنِّـــى أَسْئَلُكَ بِاسْمِكَ بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ. يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَ الإِكْرَامِ...

O' Allah, surely I ask you with Your name, In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, 'O' " .”The Lord of Majesty and Bounty

Congregational Supplication (۲

Hafs Ibn Umar Bajalli relates: "Once, I complained to Imam Sadiq (a.s) about my abject financial condition and the dismal state of life whereupon he (a.s) advised: 'When you return to Kufah, take ten dirhams and prepare some food, even if it necessitates selling the pillow upon which you sleep, and invite some of your "'.brethren-in-faith for a meal and request them to pray for you

Hafs said: "I returned to Kufah and despite all my efforts I was unable to make arrangements for the money. So, in accordance with the instructions of the Imam (a.s), I sold my pillow, prepared some food, invited some Mu'minin for a meal and requested them to pray for the termination of my problems. After eating, they prayed for me. By God! Only a short period had passed since the incident when, one day, someone began to knock at my door. Opening the door I saw that the person knocking was one with whom I had previously engaged in trade and owed me some money. He had come looking for me and handed me a large amount - around ten thousand dirhams - thus, clearing off his debt to me. From that day onwards my work began to expand and my state began to improve till I was eventually drawn out of my poverty and relieved of my troubles."(١٠)

Repelling Calamities (٣

The late Ayatullah Al-Hajj Sheikh Abdul Karim Haeri, the founder of the Hawzah Ilmiyyah of Qum recounts: "During the time when I was engaged in religious studies in the city of Samarra, an epidemic, in the form of plague, spread amongst the inhabitants of the city and everyday several people would die of the disease.

One day, some of the inhabitants of Samarra had gathered in the house of my teacher, the late Sayyid Muhammad Fisharki, when Ayatullah Mirza Muhammad Taqi Shirazi (d. ١٣٣٨ ah), who, in terms of knowledge, was at par with the late Sayyid Fisharki, suddenly arrived. In the course of the conversation, the talk drifted towards the issue of the plague that had threatened the lives of all the people.

The late Mirza said: "If I were to issue a hukm (ruling), would it not be mandatory for it to be executed?" All those present said: "Yes." He said: "I rule that from today onwards, for a period of ten days, the entire Shiite community of Samarra should recite "Ziyarat Ashura" and gift the rewards of this recitation to Hadhrat Narjis Khatun - the mother of Imam Mahdi (a.s) - in order that this calamity is repelled from them."

Those present in the gathering informed the other Shiites of this ruling and all of them engaged themselves in reciting the "Ziyarat Ashura." The following days onward, it was observed that none of the Shiites would die due to the disease whereas the non-

Shiites continued to suffer deaths – and this became plainly manifest for all the inhabitants of the city, such that some of the non-Shiites used to question their Shiite friends: “How is it that our people die due to the disease, whereas there are no deaths ”?on your side

The Shiites would answer: “All of us recite “Ziyarat Ashura” of Imam Husain (a.s) in order to remain protected from the epidemic and Allah wards away the calamity from ”!us

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۱- Surat Ibrahim (۱۴), Verse ۵: وَ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسى بِآيَاتِنَا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

۲- Suratul Hadid (۵۷), Verse ۲۵: لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَ أَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَ الْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

۳- Safinatul Bihar, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱۱: بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الأَخْلَاقِ

۴- Surat Yusuf (۱۲), Verse ۳: نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ

۵- Ibid., Verse ۱۱۱: لَقَدْ كَانَ فِى قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِى الأَلْبَابِ

۶- Suratul Mu`min (۴۰), Verse ۶۰

۷- Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۱۰, pg. ۹۹

۸- Tadhkeratul Haqa`iq, pg. ۲۰

۹- Muhaj al-Da’wat, pg. ۱۵۳; Dastanhai Az Zindagi-e-’Ali, pg. ۱۹۱

۱۰- Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Koneem, pg. ۱۰۷

Dastanha-e-Shigeft, pg. ۳۲۳

Supplicating for Rain (۴

Once, during the time of Prophet Dawud (a.s), a famine struck. The people selected thri of their scholars, who procided outside the city to pray for rain.

The first of them pleaded: "O' Lord! You have ordered us to forgive one who has done injustice to us; we have done injustice to our own selves so forgive us."

The second one implored: "O' Lord! You have instructed us to set fri the slaves; we are your slaves so set us fri."

The third of them supplicated: "O' Lord! In your Torah you have commanded us not to drive away the poor and the unfortunate ones; we are the poor ones, who now stand at your door so do not kip us deprived (of your mercy)."

The supplications of these sincere and practicing scholars had hardly finished when Allah sent down rain over the people.(۱)

Supplication for the Dead (۵

When Bahiyah, a pious lady, was about to die, she raised her head towards the heaven and prayed: "O' The Lord, Who is my treasure! I place my trust in you; do not abandon me at the time of death and deliver me from the terror of the grave."

After she died her son used to visit her grave every Thursday night and Friday morning; he would recite Qur`an and supplications, and seek forgiveness for his mother and the other inmates of the cemetery.

One night, witnessing his mother in his dreams, the youth grited her and asked: "How are you?" She said: "O' My son! The intensity of death is indescribable but praise be to Allah, for I have been granted a beautiful place in the Barzakh."

The youth asked: "Mother, do you have any desire?" She said: "Yes, my son. Always continue to recite the Noble Qur`an, supplications and ziyarat for me. I am pleased

when you visit me on Thursday nights and Friday mornings. When you come, the other deceased ones say to me, "Bahiyah, your son has come." This good news makes ".me and the other inmates around my grave happy

The youth continued to recite the Noble Qur`an and supplications for his mother and the others when one night he witnessed in his dreams that a large group had approached him. He asked them: "Who are you?" They replied: "We are the inmates of the cemetery and have come to thank you for reciting the supplications and the Noble (Qur`an for us. We request you not to abandon this practice of yours."(٢

Religion .۴٢

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَکَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفاً

(Then set your face upright for religion in the right state."(٣"

:The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said

أَلْمُسْتَأْكَلُ بِدِی ـنِهِ حَظُّهُ مِنْ دِی ـنِهِ مَا يَأْكُلُهُ.

One, who seeks to fill his stomach by means of religion, his share of religion is what" (he fills in his stomach."(۴

Short Explanation

Allah grants the worldly provisions to His friends as well His enemies. However, He only bestows His religion to His friends - just as he has placed monotheism within the fitrah and nature of every person, but grants His special religion to those whom He .pleases

One ought to sacrifice one's life and wealth for the religion of Allah and adorn oneself with the insignias of religion, such as truthfulness, steadfastness, faithfulness .towards trusts, fulfilment of pledges and covenants, and goodness of behaviour

Imam ‘Ali (a.s) was passing by a place where a group of children were engaged in play. However, there was one boy who was not playing with them but stood aloof and sad. Imam (a.s) approached him and asked: “What is your name?” He replied: “Mat al-Din (Religion died).”

The Imam (a.s) desired to know the reason for such a name and so inquired about the child's father. He was informed that his father had died, but his mother was alive. He (a.s) called for his mother and inquired about the reason for such a strange name, whereupon the mother said: “When this child was in my womb, his father had embarked upon a journey. After a period his companions approached me and said: “Your husband fell ill on the way and died, but before his death he requested us that if his child was born, he should be named Mat al-Din.”

Having heard this, the Imam (a.s) comprehended the reason for such a name and ordered all the people to gather in the mosque. When the people had gathered, he (a.s) said to them: “Whenever I recite Allahu Akbar, all of you should recite it in unison too.”

He then called for the dead person's companions - who were four in number - and subjected them to individual and separate interrogation.

Turning to the first person, he (a.s) sought to know how he had killed the boy's father. The man, who was stunned to hear the question, blurted out: “All I did was to present the cord.” The Imam (a.s) recited Allahu Akbar, and the people in the mosque chorused.

The second one, in answer to the Imam's (a.s) question, said: “My only crime was to tie the cord around his neck.” The third person said: “I had brought the knife”, while the fourth person, recounting the incident explicitly, said: “We collectively murdered him for the purpose of seizing and appropriating his wealth.” The Imam (a.s) recited Allahu Akbar and the people too recited in unison.

Imam ‘Ali (a.s) took possession of the wealth which they had stolen from the

deceased and handed it to the boy's mother, and then subjected the killers to a severe punishment. Then turning to the boy's mother, he (a.s) said: “Change his name to Asha al-Din (religion is alive).”(5)

2) The Religiousness of the Learned One from Dizful

At the time of his death, Sheikh Murtadha Ansari - having become the highest-ranking religious authority, with notable popularity and profundity in the Methodology and Science of Islamic Jurisprudence - was not any different in the material point of life from the time when he had first set foot in Najaf as a poor student from Dizful.

When people looked at his house, they found that he led his life just as the most impoverished ones led theirs. A person once said to him: “This is an immense work on your part that despite the large sum of money that comes to you, you refuse to use it for yourself.” He said: “What great work have I done?” The man said: “What work could be greater than what you are doing presently?” The Sheikh said: “At the very best, my work is similar to the donkey-riders of Kashan, who go to Isfahan and then return from there.

The donkey-riders are given money to travel to Isfahan, purchase goods from there and bring them back to Kashan. Have you ever sin them exhibiting unfaithfulness and disloyalty with respect to the people's money? They are trustworthy individuals and do not possess any right (over the people's money). This work of mine is not as important as it appears to you.”(6)

3) Religion Beside the Royal Throne

During the caliphate of the second Caliph, Sad Ibn Waqqas in the company of a few others, started out for Iran. Yazdgard, the king of Persia who was in the city of Madain at that time, sent a herald to Sad inviting some of the people in his caravan to come to his court so that he could become aware of their destination.

They reached his court at a time when he had been busy consuming wine and so he ordered the drinks to be removed. When the group had entered the court, Mughairah Ibn Amir sat down alongside the king near the royal bed. Witnessing this, Yazdgard, in

a state of protest, said: “You Arabs initially came to our lands for trading and begging, and after you had consumed the tasty food and the delicious water (of our land) you went and informed your friends. Now you return and claim to have brought a 'new '.religion

Your example is similar to that of the fox that had entered a garden with the intention of eating the grapes. The owner of the garden allowed him to eat and did not hurt him. The next day the fox brought other foxes along with him and, entering the garden, began eating the grapes. When the owner of the garden arrived and witnessed the .scene, he bolted all the exits and killed them all

If I wished, I too could behave just like that but I know that you have drawn up your army because of your poverty and straitened livelihood. I shall give you abundant bounties and place over you a commander such that you would lead a life of ease and ”.comfort

Mughairah IbnAamir said: “Your statement regarding a difficult livelihood is correct and we too agree that there was a time when we used to eat mice and lizards, could not differentiate the lawful from the unlawful, kill our cousins for the sake of one turnip and even go on to brag about it. But then Allah, by means of His Prophet, sent for us a religion, stopped us from idolatry, guided us towards monotheism, and very .soon we shall be targeting your country too

O' Yazdgard! I give you the option to choose one out of three things: Become a Muslim ”.so that you can continue to rule, pay the poll-tax or prepare for war

Hearing this, Yazdgard was overcome with rage and said: “Nothing, save a sword, can exist between you and me.” Having said this, he then drove them out of his court. Later, a war ensued betwin the two forces in which the Muslims emerged (victorious.(۷

The Religiousness of Abu Ja’far Husaini (۴

Abu Ja’far Muhammad Husaini(۸) - whose lineage reached Imam Husain (a.s) through four generations - was a jurist and a pious and ascetic person, who had revolted

against Mutasam – the Abbasid Caliph – due to his oppression and injustices. Mutasam sought to crush his revolt and so he fled to Iran and into the cities of Khorasan, Sarakhs, Taliqan, Nisa and Merv, and a great number of Iranians pledged allegiance .to him

In Merv, forty thousand Iranians pledged allegiance to him. One night, when his army had gathered, he heard the sound of weeping. Investigating, he came to know that one of his soldiers had forcefully taken felt from a weaver and it was this weaver who .had been weeping

Abu Ja'far called for the soldier and sought to know the reason for the evil act whereupon the soldier replied: We have pledged allegiance to you so that we can loot .the people and do as we like

Abu Ja'far returned the felt to its owner and then disbanded his army, saying: "Assistance for the religion of Allah cannot be sought from such people." Then, (accompanied by his close companions, he left for Taliqan.(۹

Religion–Selling by Samurah (۵

Samurah Ibn Jundab was of the inhabitants of Basrah. After his father's death, he accompanied his mother to Madinah, where she married Mary Ibn Shaiban – a companion of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) – and Samurah grew up under his care. Despite his young age, he was an expert archer and the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) permitted him to participate in the battle of Uhud; later, he participated in the other .battles as well

During the reign of Muawiyah, Samurah, like some of the corrupt and lying companions of the Noble Prophet(s.a.w), began fabricating traditions in praise of .(Muawiyah and in criticism of Amirul Mo`minin (a.s

Muawiyah said to him: "I shall give you one hundred thousand dirhams if you ascribe the following verse (which was revealed in criticism of the hypocrites) to 'Ali Ibn Abi :Talib

وَ مِنَ النّـاسِ مَنْ يُعْجِبُـكَ قَوْلُهُ فِى الْحَيـاهِ الـدُّنْـيـا وَ يُشْـهِدُ اللّهَ عَلى مَا فِى قَلْبِهِ وَ هُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصامِ وَ إِذا تَوَلّى سَـعى فِى الأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَ يُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَ النَّسْلَ وَ اللّهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ الْفَسادَ

And among men is he, whose speech about the life of this world causes you to" wonder, and he calls on Allah to witness as to what is in his heart, yet he is the most violent of adversaries. And when he turns back, he runs along in the land that he may cause mischief in it and destroy the tilth and the stock, and Allah does not love (mischief-making."(10)

and ascribe this verse (which was revealed in praise of Imam 'Ali (a.s) after he had... slept on the bed of the Noble Prophet during the migration of the Noble Prophet to :Medina) to Ibn Muljim

وَ مِنَ النّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِى نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغاءَ مَرْضاتِ اللّهِ وَ اللّهُ رَؤُفٌ بِالْعِبادِ

And among men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is" (Affectionate to the servants."(11)

Initially Samurah refused the offer, howver Muawiyah raised the stakes saying: "I shall give you two hundred thousand dirhams", but once again Samurah refused. But when Muawiyah offered him four hundred thousand dirhams he agreed and then forged traditions ascribeeng the first verse, which was about the hypocrites, to Amirul Mominin (a.s) and attributing the second verse, which was for Amirul Mominin (a.s), to (Ibn Muljim, and in this manner proved that he had indeed sold his religion.(12)

(Dhikr (Remembrance Of Allah .43

point

:Allah, the Wise, says

أَلاَ بِذِكْرِ اللهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

(Now surely by Allah's remembrance are the hearts set at rest."(13"

:(Allah said to Musa (a.s

لَا تَدَعْ ذِكرِی عَلی کُلِّ حالٍ.

(Under no circumstance (should you) abandon My remembrance."(14)"

Short Explanation

Remembering Allah – with concentration and presence of heart – is the ultimate objective of all acts of worship. If a dhakir (one who recites dhikr and is engaged in the remembrance of Allah) is focussed towards Allah in heart and deeds, he shall come to possess a rank such that the Satan would be unable to overcome him and gain dominance over him!

If the tongue were to recite, but the heart were to be heedless, the effects and the benefits would be reduced. At the same time if he were to regard his recitations as something very important and significant, he would be overcome by pride and vanity.

Accordingly, it is vital that in addition to remembering Allah, a person should regard himself as trivial and insignificant – rather, he should look upon himself as a non-entity before His bounties; he should beseech Him to never ever make him heedless and negligent of His remembrance but instead bestow an increase in it.

1) Remembering Allah when Confronting the Enemy

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) had started out for a battle and on the way ordered his army to halt.

In order to relieve himself, he distanced himself from his forces and headed towards a secluded location. In the meantime, it began to rain and it rained so hard that water began to flood as a result of which, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) was cut off from his army.

Having witnessed the change in weather, he (s.a.w) sat beneath a tree when Huwairith Ibn al-Harith happened to see him. Speaking to his companions, he said: "This man is Muhammad and he has become isolated from his forces. May Allah kill me if I do not kill him!"

He unsheathed his sword and rushed at him (s.a.w) saying: “Who is it that can deliver you from me?” The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said: “Allah” and then prayed softly: “O' Lord! Deliver me from the evils of Huwairith in any manner as you please.”

Just as Huwairith was about to inflict his blow an angel struck him on his shoulder as a result of which he collapsed onto the ground and the sword fell from his grasp. The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) picked it up and said to him: “Who is it that can save you from me?” He said: “No one.” The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) advised: “Accept Islam and I shall hand your sword back to you!” He said: “I shall not accept Islam but I shall pledge that neither shall I fight you and your followers, nor help anyone against you.”

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) returned his sword to him whereupon, Huwairith said: “I swear that you are better than me.”(۱۵)

۲) The Enamoured One

Sadi states: “Once it so happened that I had been travelling throughout the night in the company of a group of people. Accompanying us on this journey was a person, who was obsessed with Allah and drowned in His love. It was not yet dawn when we reached a jungle where we decided to rest, however as soon as we arrived, the person uttered a cry and rushing into the woods immediately engaged himself in supplicating and communicating with his Lord.

When it was morning, I asked him: What was that state which overcame you last night? He replied: Looking into the jungle, I witnessed the nightingales on the trees, the partridges on the mountains, the frogs in the water and the various animals in the jungle weeping and lamenting (out of love for Allah), and so thought to myself that it would be contrary to courtesy and civility that while all the other creations were engaged in His glorification, I slept, heedless and unmindful of Him.”(۱۶)

۳) The Poor Ones Question the Noble Prophet

Some of the poor persons of Madinah approached the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and said to him: “The affluent ones perform acts of goodness like freeing slaves, giving charity, performing the Hajj etc., which are beyond our means (as a result, they shall be in

".(possession of greater rewards than us

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said: "One, who recites Allahu Akbar a hundred times, shall be granted rewards which shall exceed the rewards of freeing one hundred slaves. One, who recites Subhan Allah a hundred times, shall come to possess rewards better than the rewards associated with the performance of Hajj. Reciting Alhamdulillah a hundred times is better than giving one hundred fully laden horses as charity in the way of Allah. One, who recites La Ilaha Illallah a hundred times, shall be of the best of ".the people on the Day of Judgment

When the affluent ones of Madinah came to know of this they too began to act upon these recommendations and so the poor ones again approached the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and complained: "The affluent ones too have started to act upon your recommendations!" Hearing their complaint, he (s.a.w) remarked: "This is Allah"s (grace and favour; He grants it to whomsoever He pleases."(١٧

Remembering the Beloved while in Comfort (۴

Allah had granted immense bounties to Prophet Ayyub (a.s) such that it has been reported that he possessed five hundred pairs of bulls for ploughing his fields and hundreds of slaves, who used to cultivate his farms. His cargo-carrying camels were .three thousand in number while his ship totalled seven thousand

In addition to this, Allah had also granted him good health and numerous children. On his part, Ayyub (a.s) perpetually praised and thanked his Lord, and when faced with .two acts of obedience, he would always choose the more difficult of the two

But then, he became the object of Divine trials - not for having committed any sin but rather for raising his rank and status - such that Allah took back all the bounties that .He had given him and afflicted his body with an incurable disease

However, despite the severity of the adversity, when Ayyub (a.s) never abandoned thanking, praising and remembering Allah, the Satan got into the act. He began whispering into his (a.s) wife's mind as a result of which she started to complain of the hard times that had befallen them and would moan: "Everyone has deserted us and

we do not possess anything.” Ayyub (a.s) said: “For eighty years we had been receiving the bounties of Allah and so we should not complain for seven years of hardships but instead continue to remember Him in all circumstances!”

But his wife continued to complain and protest, and persistently placed before him irrational ideas till eventually, enraged, he hollered: “Go away from me such that I do not set my eyes upon you ever again.”

When his wife had left him, Ayyub found himself alone and without a caretaker; going into prostration, he began praying to his Lord and communicating with Him. On this occasion Allah answered the prayers of His servant, who had continued to praise and thank Him, and once again granted him all the bounties!

Meanwhile his wife thought to herself: “Though he has driven me away, it is inappropriate for me to leave him alone. He has none to look after him and he may perish out of hunger.” With this in mind she returned to the place where she had left him but found him missing, while in his place, sat a youth. As she began to weep, the youth asked her: “Why do you weep?” She replied: I had left my old husband here but I do not see him anymore. The youth said: “If you were to see him, would you recognize him?” She said: “Yes.” Having answered him, she then looked at him hard and realised that he possessed a great resemblance to her husband. The youth then said to her: “I am the same Ayyub.”(١٨)

۵) The Woman who Remembered Allah

Sayyidah Nafisah, the daughter of Hasan Ibn Zaid Ibn Hasan al-Mujtaba (a.s)) married Ishaq Mutamin, the pious and virtuous son of Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s). She was of the rare and distinguished ladies of her time and stood apart from the rest with regards to worship and remembrance of Allah.

Zainab, her niece, states: “I had been in the services of my aunt for forty years and throughout this period neither did I ever observe her sleep at night (for she would be engaged in worship) nor eat in the day (for she would be engaged in fasting). Once I said to her: “Would it not be better if you were to ease things upon yourself?” She

replied: “How can I place myself in ease when I have before me the bottlenecks of the ”!Purgatory and the Day of Judgment which none can cross save the delivered ones

She possessed great wealth, which she used to spend on the sick, the bed-ridden and .the impoverished ones for the pleasure of Allah

She had the honour of performing the Hajj on thirty occasions - most of her journeys to the House of Allah being accomplished on foot. Once, in the company of her husband, she started out from Madinah for Palestine in order to visit the grave of .Prophet Ibrahim (a.s) after which she proceeded towards Egypt

The inhabitants of Egypt requested her to settle down there and she agreed. She dug a grave in her house and perpetually engaged herself in worship and remembrance of Allah - reportedly completing thousands of recitations of the Noble Qur`an in the .grave

According to Hadith-e-Qudsi, when Allah observes that a servant of His continually engages himself in His remembrance, He manifests the person's worth amongst the .people and makes him respected and revered

In the neighbourhood of Nafisah there lived a Jew, who had a daughter who was blind. By means of the water of Nafisah's Wudhhu, the Jew's daughter regained her .sight and this prompted numerous Jews of Egypt to accept Islam

One day, in a state of fast, as she recited the chapter al-Anam of the Noble Qur`an, :upon reciting the verse

لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلَامِ عِنْدَ رَبِّـــهِمْ

”They shall have the abode of peace with their Lord“

her soul departed from her body. The people wanted her to be buried in Egypt but her husband, desiring to take her to Madinah, refused. At night the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) appeared to him in his dream and said: “Do not oppose the people of Egypt in connection with Nafisah's burial since Allah shall descend His mercy upon them as a

".result of her blessed presence there

Shanidaniha-e-Tarikh, pg. ٢٢; Mahajjatul Baidha, vol. ٢, pg. ٢٩٩ -١

Muntakhab al-Tawarikh, pg. ٨۴٩; Raudhatul Riyahin -٢

Suratul Rum (٣٠), Verse ٣٠ -٣

Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ٧٨, pg. ۶٣ -۴

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١٠, pg. ١۶٨; In the book Tarikh al-Anbiya - vol. ٢, pg. ٢١۵, -۵ this judgment has bin attributed to Prophet Dawud and a similar one this has been .(ascribed to the Commander of the Faithfuls(as

Dastanha-e-Ustad, vol. ٢, pg. ۶٨; Sirah-e-Nabawi, pg. ٢٩ -۶

Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۵, pg. ٢٣۴; Bazm-e-Iran, pg. ١۴٢ -٧

He was the son of Qasim Ibn 'Umar Ibn 'Ali Ibn al-Husain (as) while his mother, -٨ .(Safiyyah, was the daughter of Musa Ibn 'Umar Ibn 'Ali Ibn al-Husain (as

Tatimmah al-Muntaha, pg. ٢٢١ -٩

Suratul Baqarah (٢), Verse ٢٠۴-٢٠۵ -١٠

Ibid., Verse ٢٠٧ -١١

Paighambar Wa Yaran, vol. ٣, pg. ٢۵٨; Commentary of Nahjul Balagha (of Ibn Abil -١٢ Hadid), vol. ١, pg. ۴٧١

Suratul Ra'd (١٣), Verse ٢٨ -١٣

Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ١٣, pg. ٣۴٢ -١۴

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ٢, pg. ۶٧; The commentary of Abul Futuh -١۵

Hikayat-ha-e-Gulistan, pg. ١٢٧ -١۶

Shanidaniha-e-Tarikh, pg. ١٨; Mahajjatul Bai¤a, vol. ٢, pg. ٢٧۴ -١٧

Tarikh-e-Anbiya, vol. ٢, pg. ٢٠ -١٨

Sustenance .۴۴

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ مَا مِنْ دَآبَّهٍ فِی الأَرْضِ إلاّ عَلَی اللهِ رِزْقُها

(And there is no creature on the earth but on Allah is the sustenance of it."(۱"

:The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said

أَلرِّزْقُ یَطلُبُ الْعَبْدَ أَشَدُّ طَلَباً مِنْ أَجلِهِ

(Sustenance seeks a person more intensely than his death does."(۲"

Short Explanation

There exists no creature except that Allah has apportioned a livelihood for it, and no soul departs from the world before it has consumed the last morsel that had been ordained for it. One should strive to procure lawful sustenance and, in the event of delay and stoppages in this path, desist from attempting to obtain it by unlawful .means - the best approach being that of patience and self-control

Every person has his sustenance placed in a particular thing - one has his sustenance placed in trade, while another has it in leadership while yet another in farming, etc. Absence of satisfaction with respect to the share allotted, and lack of contentment strengthens the vices of greed and covetousness within man leading him towards sins in order to procure an increased sustenance - a state that only stems from a lack of .Tawakkul(۳)) in Allah

!They Should Witness the Wisdom (۱

Prophet Musa (a.s) came across a poor person who, due to his abject poverty, lay bare-bodied on the desert sand. When he (a.s) came nearer, the person requested:

“O' Musa! Pray to Allah that he grants me a little sustenance for I am on the verge of ”.dying

Musa (a.s) prayed for him and then proceeded from there to Mount Sinai to converse .with Allah

A few days later Musa (a.s), on his return, happened to pass by that very place when he witnessed that the same poor man had been arrested and a large crowd had .gathered around him

He (a.s) inquired: “What has happened?” The people present there said: “Until recently he was penniless but off late he had managed to acquire some money; having consumed wine, he got involved in a brawl and killed a person. He has now been ”!arrested so that he can be subjected to 'qisas'(۴)) and put to death

:Allah says in the Noble Qur`an

وَ لَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِی الْأَرْضِ

And if Allah should amplify the provision for His servants they would certainly revolt in“ (the earth.”(۵

Musa (a.s) acknowledged the divine Wisdom and, expressing repentance over his (request, sought Allah's forgiveness.(۶

Incorrect Deduction from The Qur`an (۲

Umar Ibn Muslim was one of the companions of Imam Sadiq (a.s) and used to visit him .(a.s) frequently

Once, when he did not visit the Imam (a.s) for a long time, he (a.s) inquired about him from ‘Ali Ibn Abdul Aziz, who said: “May I be made your ransom! He has stopped working for his livelihood, and has engaged himself in worship and asceticism instead. Hearing this, Imam Sadiq (a.s) said: “Woe unto him! But does he not know that the ”!prayers of one, who stops working, go unanswered

:During the time of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), when the verse

وَ مَنْ یَتَّقِ اللَّهَ یَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجاً وَ یَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَیْثُ لا یَحْتَسِبُ

And whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allah, He will make for him an outlet, and give" him sustenance from whence he thinks not"(۷) was revealed, a group from amongst the Muslims abandoned their professions, adopted seclusion and engaged themselves in worship, saying: "Allah Himself provides the sustenance and shall never permit the religious ones to become distressed and destitute; hence why do we need ".to toil in order to procure our sustenance

When the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) was informed of this, he (s.a.w) summoned them and objecting at this attitude of theirs, asked: "Why have you abandoned your professions?" They replied: "Allah has undertaken to provide us our sustenance." When he (s.a.w) heard this, he explained: "It is not as you think. Allah does not answer the prayers of a person who, despite possessing the ability to work and exert himself, fails to do so. You must continue to engage yourselves in your respective (professions."(۸

Sustenance in the Measure of Sufficiency (۳

Once, passing through a desert, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and his companions happened to come across a person tending camels and requested him to provide them with some milk. The man excused himself saying: "The milk that is in the breasts of these camels is for the breakfast of the people of the tribe and that, which lies in ".the container, is for their evening meals

When he heard this, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) prayed for him, saying: "O' Lord! Increase this person in wealth and children" - and the group continued on its way. A little later they came across another person, who too was engaged in feeding the camels. When they requested him to provide them with some milk, he immediately milked the she-camels and poured all of the milk in the vessels of the Noble Prophet's (s.a.w). In addition to the milk he even presented them with a sheep and said: At the .moment this is all I can offer but if you desire I shall arrange for more

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) raised his holy hands and prayed: “O' Lord! Grant him sustenance in a measure that is sufficient for him.”

Astonished, his (s.a.w) companions said: “O' Prophet of Allah! For the person who rejected your request you sought something which all of us long for, whereas for the one who fulfilled your desire, you prayed for something, which none of us prefer (sustenance in a measure that is just sufficient and not excess)!”

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said:

إِنَّ مَا قَلَّ وَ كَفَى خَيْرٌ مِمَّا كَثُرَ وَ أَلْهَى

“A livelihood that is less but sufficient for (fulfilling the needs of) one's life is better than great riches that engrosses man in itself.” He (s.a.w) then supplicated:

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْ مُحَمَّداً وَ آلَ مُحَمَّدٍ الْكَفَافَ

“O' Lord! Grant Muhammad and his Progeny a sustenance in the measure that is just sufficient (for them).(٩)

4) Charity Increases Sustenance

Imam Sadiq (a.s) had many sons, one of whom was named Muhammad. Occasionally it would so happen that his income would exceed his expenses. Once, Imam Sadiq (a.s) inquired: “How much have you managed to save?” He replied: “Forty dinars.” The Imam (a.s) said: “Give it as charity in the way of Allah. He said: This is all that I have with me and if I were to give this in charity there would be nothing left for me.”

The Imam (a.s) insisted: “Go and give it in charity and Allah shall compensate it for you. Do you not know that for everything there is a key and the key to sustenance is charity?”

Muhammad, heeding his father's advice, gave the forty dinars in charity. Hardly ten days had passed by since this episode when a sum of four thousand dinars was presented to the Imam (a.s). Turning to Muhammad, he (a.s) said: “My Son! We gave forty dinars in the path of Allah and He gave us four thousand dinars (a hundred

(times) in return."(۱۰)

Wealth from Unknown Places (۵

The Buyids, whose sultanate had commenced in the year ۳۲۲ ah, ruled for a period of ۱۲۶ years. The greatest of the Buyid rulers and the most compassionate of them all with respect to the Shiite faith and his subjects was Imad al-Daulah - (Abul Hasan, 'Ali Ibn Babwaih) - who ruled for nine years (d. ۳۳۸ ah). During his lifetime, several strange incidents occurred with him in connection with riches and treasures:

۱. When Imad al-Daulah arrived in Shiraz, Yaqut, whom Al-Muqtadir Billah Abbasi had placed there as the governor, took to flight. In the circumstances, Imad al-Daulah did not possess anything to pay for the expenditure of his army. Distressed and lost in thought he set out for hunting. On the way the foot of his horse plunged into a hole. As Imad al-Daulah extracted the animal's foot, the hole widened revealing a treasure which Yaqut had concealed there. He extracted the treasure and used it to pay for his army's expenses.

۲. Once, as he lay down and reflected about his army and subjects, his eyes suddenly fell upon a snake that had emerged from one corner of the roof and disappeared into another. As a precautionary measure, he ordered the roof to be taken apart and the snake killed so that it did not sting anyone.

When a portion of the roof was broken, a second roof became manifest and the intervening region betwin the two roofs was found to house chests containing a total of five hundred thousand dinars. The chests were brought down and Imad al-Daulah distributed the money amongst his subjects.

۳. Once, having decided to have some clothes stitched for the elders of his army, his soldiers and himself, he called for a tailor. The special tailor of Yaqut, the erstwhile governor of the city, was recommended to him. Incidentally this tailor happened to be deaf but Imad al-Daulah said: "The faculty of sight is what a tailor ought to necessarily possess; as for hearing, it is not a necessity."

When the tailor was brought before him, he ordered: "I want you to stitch clothes for

".my servants, soldiers, officers, generals and myself

The tailor - deaf that he was - imagined that someone had spoken ill of him and, complaining that he had money in his possession, said: "There are only four chests of the governor Yaqut in my custody and I am unaware of what is contained within "!them

Imad al-Daulah ordered the chests to be brought before him; when they were opened, they were found to contain great riches, beautiful clothes and valuable (stones.(۱۱

(Pleasure (Over Divine Acts .۴۵

point

:Allah, the Wise, says

رَضِیَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ وَ رَضُوا عَنهُ

(Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him."(۱۲"

:Imam Sajjad (a.s) has said

أَلصَّبْرُ وَ الرِّضاَ رَأْسُ طاَعِهِ اللهِ

Patience and pleasure (over Divine acts) constitute the pinnacle of Allah's" (obedience."(۱۳

Short Explanation

The attribute of Ridha is that a person remains pleased with occurrences - irrespective of whether they are to his liking or otherwise. This characteristic is a ray from the light of (Divine) cognizance such that a person possessing this attribute turns away from his own desires and seeks that which Allah has decreed for him instead. This is because attachment of the heart to worldly and material things is shirk, and .therefore inconsistent with the attribute of Ridha

It is amazing to observe those, who vociferously claim to be the servants and worshippers of Allah, complaining and grumbling over Divine decrees and acts. However, those who are truly cognizant, are in total submission and subservience to Allah – pleased and satisfied with Divine destinies, uncomplaining in the face of adversities, shortages and severity of trials, and contented and happy over things bestowed to them as well as those not granted to them.(۱۴)

۱) Complete Contentment with Allah

Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari, who had been of the companions of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), had remained alive till the time of Imam Baqir (a.s) but had become old and blind by then.

Once, when he had arrived in the presence of the Imam (a.s), the Imam (a.s) inquired after his health, whereupon he said: "I find myself in a state such that I give preference to old age over youth, to sickness over soundness of health and to death over life!"

The Imam (a.s) responded by saying: "(On the contrary) if Allah makes me old, I prefer old age; if He desires to give me youth, I prefer youth; if He afflicts me with sickness, I desire sickness, and if He desires to favour me with sound health, I prefer soundness of health. If Allah wishes to give me death, I prefer death and if He wills to keep me alive, I desire to live."

As soon as Jabir heard the Imam's (a.s) speech he kissed his (a.s) face and said: "The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) had spoken the truth." He had said: "O' Jabir! You shall continue to live till you meet one of my children whose name shall be Baqir. He shall split open knowledge just as a cow splits open the earth."(۱۵)

۲) Pleased with Three Calamities

Hadhrat Isa [Jesus] (a.s) happened to come upon a blind, paralytic leper, whose disease had caused his very flesh to fall out of his body, and overheard him say: "Thanks to Allah, Who has cured me from the affliction that has seized numerous persons in its grasp!"

Isa (a.s) said to him: “O' Man! What is that affliction from which He has protected you?” The man replied: “O' Spirit of Allah! I am better off than one whose heart does not possess the cognizance of Allah - that cognizance which He has placed in mine.”

Hearing this, Isa (a.s) said to him: “You have spoken correctly. Now give me your hand.” Then taking hold of his hand, Isa (a.s) moved his holy hand over the leper's body, whereupon, the leper was immediately cured of his afflictions and was transformed into a man of charming appearance and good physique. Since he had remained pleased (and uncomplaining) over the tribulations that had afflicted him, Allah cured him of his ailments. Later on he went on to become one of the companions of Isa (a.s) and engaged in worship along with him (a.s).(۱۶)

۳) One of the Inmates of Paradise

Imam Sadiq (a.s) relates: “Once, Allah revealed to Hadhrat Dawud (a.s) to give glad tidings to Khalladah, the daughter of Aus, that she was of the inmates of Paradise and would be one of his (a.s) companions in it.” Hadhrat Dawud (a.s) went to her house and knocked at her door, and it was Khalladah herself who opened it. She recognized him the moment she set her eyes upon him and so inquired: “Has something been revealed about me that you have come here?” When he (a.s) had replied in the affirmative, she said: “The revelation is probably for someone else, who resembles me in name!”

He (a.s) said: “No. The revelation has been for you. Tell me something about yourself.”

She replied: “Whenever any pain, injury or misfortune would come to afflict me, I would exhibit patience and submit myself to Allah's pleasure. Neither would I desire any of the adversities to be warded away from me nor would I aspire for anything in exchange; I was always thankful to Him and His pleasure was the only thing that I coveted!”

When he heard this, Hadhrat Dawud (a.s) said: “It is because of this that you have reached such a rank that Allah has sent down this revelation about you.”

Having related this incident, Imam Sadiq (a.s) said: “This is that very religion, which

(Allah has chosen for His righteous servants."(17)

Ammar in the Battle of Siffin (4

Ammar Yasir was one of the special companions of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) possessed such a high degree of faith that the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) had stated: Ammar is replete with faith from head to toe, and faith has blended with (and become (part of) his flesh and blood."(18)

After the death of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) he continued to be of those who fiercely supported Imam 'Ali (a.s), and when the battle of Siffin commenced, he fought on the side of the Imam (a.s). One day, coming out of the ranks of the Imam's (a.s) army, he stationed himself before the enemy forces and said: "O' Lord! You are aware that if I were to realize that Your happiness lies in my hurling myself into the seas, I would surely do so; and if I were to know that Your happiness lies in that I fling myself upon the point of a sword so that it enters into my stomach and emerges from the back of my neck, I would certainly do so. I know that today, Your happiness lies in waging a battle with these sinning and corrupt people, and had I known of an act that would ".have pleased You more, I would have surely opted for it

Then, raising his voice, he said: "Whoever desires Allah's pleasure and does not desire ".to return to his wealth and children should come to me

He was eventually martyred after displaying great valor and courage in the battlefield. Reaching his dead body, the Commander of the Faithfuls(a.s) sat down, placed his head upon his thighs and, as he wept, said: "O' Death! It appears that you are totally familiar with those, whom I love; you come and take them away from (me."(19)

The Best Creation (5

Prophet Musa (a.s) requested to Allah: "O' Lord! Show to me who, from amongst all Your creations, is the best person who worships You." Allah revealed to him: "Proceed ".towards the village situated near the sea-shore and you shall find the person there

Reaching there Musa (a.s) found a leper, who was engaged in praising and glorifying Allah. He (a.s) asked Jibra`il: "Where is the person whom I had sought from Allah?" Jibra`il pointed to the sick person and said: "This is the person! I am under instructions to take away his eyes; pay careful attention to what he shall say."

Having said this, he pointed towards the leper's eyes and they suddenly popped out of their sockets. As soon as this happened, the leper said: "O' Allah! Till You desired you let me benefit from my eyes and now You have desired to take them away from me. O' The One! Who does good to me and provides me with goodness."

Approaching him, Musa (a.s) said: "O' Servant of Allah! I am a person whose prayers are always accepted; if you desire, I shall pray to Allah so that He returns your eyes to you."

The man said: "No, I do not desire it. Allah has desired this state for me and I am pleased with all that pleases Him."

Musa (a.s) said: "I heard you say: "O' The One! Who does good to me and provides me with goodness. What did you mean by these words?"

He said: "In this village I am the only one who is cognizant of Allah and worships Him (what goodness could be greater than this that He has made me aware and cognizant of Himself)."

Musa (a.s) was overcome by astonishment and amazement, and as he turned back, he said to himself: "He is the greatest worshipper of Allah in the world."

۱- Surat Hud (۱۱), Verse ۶

۲- Jame'ul Akhbar, pg. ۱۲۶

۳- Placing one's trust (in Allah) (Tr.)

۴- Retaliation (Tr.)

۵- Suratul Shura (۴۲), Verse ۲۷

۶- Hikayat-ha-e-Gulistan, pg. ۱۶۱

۷- Suratul Talaq (۶۵), Verse ۲-۳

۸- Ba Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Konim, pg. ۱۶۳; al-Wafi, vol. ۱۰, pg. ۱۵

۹- Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۲, pg. ۷۲; Anwar al-Nu'maniyyah, pg. ۳۴۲

۱۰- Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۴, pg. ۹۲; Al-Kafi, vol. ۴, pg. ۹

۱۱- Jame' al-Nurain, pg. ۳۲۳. It has bin reported in the book 'Akhbar-e-Ghaibiyyah dar malahim wa fitan' (pg. ۳۱۴), that Amirul Mu'minin (as), alluding to the rule of the Buyids, had stated: يخرج من ديلمان بنو الصياد ... ثم يستقوى امرهم حتى يملكوا الزوراء و يخلعوا الخلفاء

۱۲- Suratul Mujadilah (۵۸), Verse ۲۲

۱۳- Jame' al-Sa'adat, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۰۳

۱۴- Tadhkeratul Haqa`iq, pg. ۸۵

۱۵- Pand-e-Tarikh, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۸۶

۱۶- Ilm-e-Akhlaq-e-Islami, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۶۲; Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۰۸'

۱۷- Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۳, pg. ۳۷; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۷۱, pg. ۸۹

۱۸- Safinatul Bihar, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۷۵: ان عمارا ملئ ايمانا من قرنه الى قدمه و اختلط الايمان بلحمه و دمه

۱۹- Paighambar Wa Yaran, vol. ۵, pp. ۲۴-۲۸; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۸, pg. ۵۲۴

pg. ٣٧٣; Shaytan, vol. ١, pg. ٥٢۴

Showing Off .۴۶

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ لاَ تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُم بَطَراً وَ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ

And be not like those who came forth from their homes in great exultation and to be" (sin of men."(١

:The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said

لاَ يَقْبَلُ اللّٰه تَعَالَى عَمَلاً فِيهِ مِثقَالُ ذَرَّهٍ مِنْ رِيَاءٍ

(Allah shall not accept a deed, which has an atom's weight of showing off in it."(٢"

Short Explanation

Showing off is a tree that comes into existence as a result of hypocrisy and whose fruit is nothing but concealed polytheism. It is exhibited before entities that neither have the ability to grant life and death, nor the authority to fulfil the needs of any .person

On the Day of Judgment, at the time of reckoning, it will be said to a person who showed off: "Collect the rewards of your deeds from those, whom you had made "!!partners to Me and for whom you had performed your deeds

Showing off usually occurs in gatherings and with respect to clothes and acts of worship. Thus, it is essential to remain attentive towards and heedful of Allah in order (to purge our interiors of this satanic vice.(٣

The Proud Monk (١

Ibrahim Adham narrated: "I acquired wisdom and enlightenment from a monk by the name of Samaan. One day I entered his monastery and asked him: "O' Samaan! How

long have you been in this monastery?” He replied: “Seventy years.” I inquired: “What has been your food during this period?” He asked: “Why do you ask such a question?” I said: “I am curious to know.” He said: “Every night I eat just one hazel-nut!” I inquired: “What is it that keeps your mind so engrossed so as to make one hazel-nut sufficient ”?for you

He replied: “Every year on an appointed day, a group of my followers come here, revere me, decorate the monastery, circumembulate it and then depart. Whenever I get exhausted of worship and experience hunger and loneliness, I overcome it by bringing to mind that day, and the honour and esteem that I come to acquire in it. Thus, my entire year's exertion and efforts are motivated by the grandeur of that one)day!'(۴

The Congregational Prayers (۲

One of the distinguished scholars, who had journeyed the path of spiritual cleansing and possessed sublime ethics, was Mulla Abdullah Shushtari. He was the tutor of Muhammad Taqi Majlisi and has numerous books to his name, one of them being)Majame' al-Fawaid, which runs into seven volumes.(۵

He was a contemporary of Sheikh Baha`i and one day, proceeded to pay him a visit. They sat in conversation until the sound of adhan was heard whereupon Sheikh Baha`i said to him: “Offer your prayers here so that we can follow you and acquire the ”.rewards of the congregational prayers

Mulla reflected for a few moments after which, excusing himself, he got up and left for his house. He was (later) asked: “Why did you turn down the Sheikh's offer when you yourself attach great importance to offering the prayers as soon as its time sets ”?in

He replied: “I reflected within myself and perceived that I was not of the kind that if a person like Sheikh were to pray behind me, I would not experience a change of state. I realized that some form of showing off might creep into me and so turned down his)request.”(۶

The Two Apparels (۳

Sufiyan Thauri happened to pass by Masjid al-Haram and there he witnessed Imam Sadiq (a.s) wearing costly and expensive clothes. He said to himself: "By Allah! I shall ".go to him and reprimand him

Approaching the Imam (a.s), he said: "O' Son of the Prophet of Allah! By Allah! You have attired yourself in a clothing, the like of which had neither been worn by the "!Noble Prophet (s.a.w) nor by 'Ali (a.s) or any of your fore-fathers

Hearing this, the Imam (a.s) said: "During the era of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), the people were troubled with poverty and paucity, but later the circumstances improved and things changed for the better. (Do know!) Of the inhabitants of the world those, who most deserve to taste the benefits of Abundance, ease and comfort, are the ".righteous ones

Having said this he (a.s) recited the following verse, "Say: Who has prohibited the embellishment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants and the good (provisions?"(۷

And then said: "Thus, we are the ones, who most deserve to utilize that which Allah has provided. O' Sufiyan! The apparel that you presently observe me wearing is for ".the people and for preserving my reputation and esteem

Then, taking hold of Sufiyan's hand, the Imam drew back his dress, revealing his inner clothing which was coarse and rough. He then said: 'This, I have worn for myself while '.the other I have worn for the people

Then, taking hold of Sufiyan's clothing, he (a.s) pulled it up to reveal a soft inner clothing and said: 'You have worn this (simple) exterior clothing for the people and the (concealed soft inner clothing for your ease and comfort!'(۸

The Dissembled Worship (۴

There once lived a worshipper who could never get himself to perform any of his

.deeds sincerely, and free from showing off

Once, attempting to redress his problem, he said to himself: 'In the corner of the city there lies an abandoned mosque which is never frequented by anyone. It would be better if I go there in the night so that there is none to see me, and engage myself in '.worshipping Allah, in total sincerity

At midnight, in the darkness of the night, he stealthily set out for the mosque. The .night was a rainy one with severe lightening and thunder

Once inside, he engaged himself in worship. A short while later he suddenly happened to hear a sound and ecstatically said to himself: 'Surely, a person has entered the mosque.' With this in mind he increased the quality and quantity of his prayers and continued his acts of worship till daybreak. In the morning, as he was about to go out of the mosque, he looked behind with the corner of his eyes only to realize that there was no one there save a black dog that had sought shelter in the mosque from the .rains, lightning and thunder

This distressed him immensely, and repentant and shameful for having worshipped for hours for a dog, he rebuked himself: 'Woe unto me! I fled and came to this abandoned mosque so that I could worship Allah with sincerity, but I have ended up (performing my acts of worship for a black dog, instead.'(٩

Informing People of Worship (۵

In the tribe of Bani Isra`il, there lived a worshipper who after years of worship, requested Allah to manifest to him his rank and status, and prayed: 'O' Lord! If my deeds are to Your liking, I would strive further in performing good deeds, but if not, then I would want to make amends for it before death overtakes me, and engage '.myself (more) in acts of worship

In his dreams he was informed: 'In the eyes of Allah, you do not possess any good deed.' Perturbed, he exclaimed: 'O' Allah! Where then have my deeds gone?' It was said to him: 'You do not possess any deed, for whenever you performed a good did, you informed the people of it. Therefore, the pleasure that you derived out of

informing them of your acts is your reward for those acts.' This disturbed him .immensely and left him greatly saddened

For the second time, he was informed in his dreams: 'Now purchase your life from Us. '!Give charity equivalent to the number of veins in your body, every day

He pleaded: 'O' Lord! How can I give such a large amount in charity when I do not '?possess anything

He heard: 'We do not impose any duty on a soul except in the measure of its ability. Recite the following three hundred and sixty times daily; every word of it is charity for :a vein of your body

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَ لاَ حَوْلَ وَ لاَ قُوَّةَ إِلاَّ بِاللَّهِ

Subhan Allahi, Wal Hamdu Lillahi, Wa La Ilaha Illallahu, Wallahu Akbar, Wa La Haul '.Wa La Quwwata Illa Billah

The worshipper, who was overjoyed to hear these words, said: 'Grant me more than this', whereupon it was said to him: 'The more you recite the more reward you shall ((earn.'(١٠

Fornication .۴۷

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

اَلزَّانِيَةُ وَ الزَّانِــى فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ واَحِدٍ مِنْهُماَ مِائَةَ جَلدَةٍ

The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication - flog each of them with a" (hundred stripes."(١١

:The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) has said

إِذاَ ظَهَرَ الزِّناَ مِنْ بَعْدِى كَثُرَ مَوْتُ الْفُجْأَهِ

(After my death, when fornication increases, sudden deaths shall (also) increase."(12)"

Short Explanation

Fornication is considered to be one of the Great Sins. A person, as a result of being overcome by lust and due to lack of faith, audaciously transgresses the womenfolk of other people.

In this world, fornication reduces sustenance and shortens the life-span, while on the Day of Judgment, a fornicator shall suffer the wrath of Allah and an evil reckoning.

The murderers of prophets, such as Prophet Yahya (a.s), and the auliya of Allah, such as Imam Husain (a.s), were mostly illegitimate children - a consequence of the Satan's invitation to a male and female to commit this sin.

Prophet Isa (a.s) said to his disciples: "Prophet Musa (a.s) had advised his people: "Do not commit fornication", (but) I advise you: "Do not even think of committing (fornication""(13)

1) Five Fornicators and Five Rulings

Five persons, who had committed fornication, were brought before Umar, who ordered them to be subjected to the legal punishment for the crime. At that moment the Commander of the Faithfuls (a.s) arrived and said: "O' Umar! Allah's ruling in their case is not as you have ruled!" Umar requested: "You issue the ruling for them and implement the legal punishment."

The Imam (a.s) beheaded the first person, stoned the second, subjected the third to the full punishment of eighty lashes, the fourth to half the punishment and ordered the discretionary punishment for the fifth!

Umar was amazed and the people astounded over the Imam's (a.s) ruling. Umar asked him: "O' Abul Hasan! Five persons were involved in one crime and you have issued different rulings for all of them?"

the Commander of the Faithfuls(a.s) explained: "The first person was a dhimmi,(14))

who had transgressed (the honour of) a Muslim woman and so had fallen out of the dhimmah[15]) - as such, his punishment could only be death.

The second person who had committed fornication possessed a spouse and so I had him stoned. The third one to have been involved in the crime did not have a wife and so I punished him with eighty lashes.

The fourth was a slave and therefore I subjected him to half the legal punishment (of eighty lashes), while the fifth one was poor of intellect due to which I subjected him to the discretionary punishment (some lashes)."

Hearing the explanation Umar exclaimed: "O' Abul Hasan! May it never happen that I have to live with the people when you are not around (to help me)!"[16]

۲) Interpretation of the Dream

Ibn Sirin was an extremely good-looking and elegant youth, and a cloth-merchant by profession. Once it so happened that a woman became enchanted with his looks; she expressed her desire to purchase cloth from him upon the condition that he should deliver it to her house, whereupon she would hand him the money.

As he reached her house and entered it, she immediately bolted the door and invited him to commit fornication. Aghast, the youth said: "I seek refuge in Allah", and then proceeded to lecture her about the reproach associated with the obscene act.

However when he observed that his words failed to have any effect upon the woman, he decided to resort to deception in order to extricate himself from his quandary.

He sought her permission to use the lavatory. Procuring her permission he entered the lavatory, dirtied himself with excrement and then approached her.

The woman, seeing him in that odious state, felt revolted and promptly turned him out of her house.

Due to this abstinence on his part with respect to fornication, Allah graced him with the science of interpretation of dreams. [17]

Prophet Yahya's Murderer was an Illegitimate Child (۳

During the time of Prophet Yahya (a.s), there lived a king by the name of Hirodis, who .was fond of him (a.s) and considered the Prophet to be a just and righteous person

There was an adulteress with whom this king had been having an illicit relationship; as she became old, she began to ornament her daughter and present her before the .king, who eventually fell in love with her and desired to marry her

He questioned Prophet Yahya (a.s) about the issue who, on the basis of the religion of Prophet Isa (a.s), declared it to be unlawful. Consequently the adulteress harboured resentment and malice towards Prophet Yahya (a.s). One day, observing the king to be in a state of intoxication, she adorned her daughter and sent her before him. Seeing her, the king sought to gratify himself but the daughter said: "I shall submit myself to you only upon the condition that you sever Yahya's head from his body." The king, in his state of inebriation, agreed and upon his instance, Prophet Yahya (a.s) was .beheaded

According to another tradition, the king desired to enter into marriage with his niece, by the name of Hirodiya, but Prophet Yahya (a.s) prohibited such a marriage as a .result of which the lady coveted the Prophet's death

Imam Baqir (a.s) said: "Yahya's (a.s) killer was an illegitimate child, as were the killers ".((of 'Ali and Husain Ibn 'Ali (a.s

When Prophet Yahya (a.s) was murdered Allah made Nebuchadnezzar (or Kardus), one of the Babylonian kings, dominant over Bait al-Maqdas, who initiated a massacre in the city. It was only when he had killed seventy thousand of the inhabitants of the (city that Prophet Yahya's blood stopped bubbling and calmed down.(۱۸

The Bath of Minjab (۴

Once, a wealthy person, who was unmindful of Allah and always engaged in pleasure and enjoyment, happened to be sitting near the door of his house. A woman wanting to go to a bath, popularly known by the name of Minjab, had lost her way to it.

Exhausted, she looked around if she could find someone who could guide her to the place when her eyes fell upon that man. Approaching him, she inquired: "Where is the Minjab bath?" Pointing to his house, he said: "This is the Minjab bath." Taking it to be the bath, she entered the house and the man quickly entered into it behind her. Once .inside, he bolted the door and approaching the lady, sought to commit adultery

The woman, perceiving that she had walked into the clutches of a immoral person and realizing that deception was the only means of escape, said to him: "I am ardently desirous too; however I am hungry and covered with dirt. Bring some perfume and some food; we can have food together after which I shall place myself at your ".disposal

The man agreed and went out of the house. Having procured some food and perfume he returned home only to find the lady missing. Her escape upset him immensely and the craving for committing adultery with the lady remained so deeply embedded in his :heart that he would always recite the following verses

يا رُبِّ قَائِلَةٍ يَوماً وَ قَد تعبتْ أَينَ الطَّرِيقُ إِلـى حَمَّامِ مَنْجَابِ

What happened to the lady, who had become exhausted? And had asked: Where is" "?the way to the Minjab bath

The time passed until it so happened that one day he lay on his death-bed. His acquaintances approached him and asked him to recite La Ilaha Illallah, Muhammadun Rasulullah, but instead, he would only recite the above verses - and (eventually passed away in that very state.(١٩

The Noble Prophet and the Youth (۵

One day a youth approached the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and with utmost disrespect "?and discourtesy, said: "O' Prophet of Allah! Do you permit me to commit fornication

These words created a great uproar amongst the people and objections could be heard from every nook and corner. The Noble Prophet (s.a.w), exhibiting sublime ethics and speaking with absolute gentleness, said: "Come near." The youth stepped

forward and sat down beside him (s.a.w), whereupon the Prophet asked: “Would you like someone to commit the act with your mother?” The youth replied: “May I be made your ransom! Never.” The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said: “Similarly the (other) people too ”.do not approve of this with respect to their daughters

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) continued: “Tell me: Would you approve of this act for your .(sister?” Once again the youth denied (and repented having asked the question

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) placed his hands upon the youth's chest and prayed for him, saying: “O' Lord! Purify his heart, forgive his sins and protect him from the pollution of depravity.” From then onwards fornication became the worst of the deeds (in the eyes of the youth.(٢٠

Generosity .۴۸

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَأَمّا مَنْ أَعْطى وَ اتّقى وَ صَدّقَ بِالْحُسْنى فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْيُسْرى

Then as for him who gives away and guards (against evil), and accepts the best, We“ (will facilitate for him the easy end.”(٢١

:The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said

لاَ يَصلُحُ دِينَكُم إلاّ السّخاءُ وَ حُسنُ الْخَلقِ .

Nothing shall ensure the welfare (and interests) of your religion except generosity“ (and good disposition.”(٢٢

Short Explanation

Generosity is one of the ethics of the Prophets, a pillar of faith and a ray of the light of firm faith. The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) has said: “The 'auliya' of Allah are, essentially and inherently, generous.” Hence, in order to acquire this attribute, a Mu'min should endeavour hard to be munificent and generous towards relatives, deserving ones and

.the like, for the pleasure of Allah

It is better that a person's generosity is associated with a thing that is dear to him - eatables, clothes, money etc. - and that no obligation is placed upon the person towards whom generosity has been exhibited; man should only view himself as a trustworthy person, whose responsibility is to pass on Allah's things to deserving and needy individuals. As such, he should stay away from frugality and refrain from withholding the Divine trusts; this is because it is not known whether or not they would yield any benefit, if given after his death, and whether or not his inheritors ?would expend them in a correct and appropriate manner

?What Shall I Answer Imam al-Zaman (۱

Sheikh ZainulAbidin Mazandarani, a student of the author of (the book) Jawahir and (also of) Sheikh Ansari, lived in the city of Kerbala. In connection with his generosity and alms-giving, it has been recorded that he would borrow as much money as he could and then distribute it amongst the needy, and his debts would then be repaid by .those coming to Kerbala from India

One day a destitute arrived at his door and asked for alms. Not having any money with him, the Sheikh picked up his copper jar, handed it to him and said: "Take this and ".sell it

A couple of days later when his family members realized that the jar was missing, they created an uproar, shouting: "A thief has taken away our jar." When the Sheikh, who was in his library, heard the outcry, he said to them: "Do not accuse the thieves ".for I am the one who has taken the jar

Once, on one of his trips to Samarrah, he fell seriously ill. Mirza Shirazi paid him a visit and began comforting him, whereupon the Sheikh said to him: "I am not at all fearful of death; my uneasiness is due to the fact that according to our beliefs, when we die, our souls are taken in the presence of the Imam-e-Asr (peace be upon him). If, at that time, the Imam were to question me: "O' Zainul 'abidin! With the credibility and esteem that we had bestowed upon you, you could have borrowed a greater amount

of money for helping the needy than what you used to; why then did you not do so? ... "'?(What shall I answer him (a.s

It is reported that Mirza Shirazi was greatly affected by these words; returning home, he brought out all the religious taxes that lay in his house and distributed them (amongst the needy.(٢٣

More Generous than Hatim (٢

Hatim Tai was questioned: "Have you come across any one more generous than yourself?" He replied: "Yes, I have." He was asked: "Where?" He said: "I had been travelling in the desert when I came across a tent. Inside it there was an old lady while behind the tent a goat lay tied. When the old lady saw me she approached me and held the reins of my horse so that I could dismount. A little later, her son arrived and was immensely pleased to have me as their guest. The old lady said to him: "Commence the preparations to entertain our guest. Go and slaughter the goat and '".prepare some food

The son said: "First I shall go and collect some firewood," but the old lady said: "Going to the desert and bringing the firewood shall consume a lot of time due to which our guest would have to remain hungry for long, and this would be contrary to social ".etiquette

So the son, breaking the only two lances that he possessed, slaughtered the goat, .prepared the food and presented it before me

When I investigated about their condition, I realized that the goat had been their only .possession and despite this, they had slaughtered it for me

I said to the old lady: "Do you recognize me?" When she replied in the negative, I said: "I am Hatim Tai. You must come with me to my tribe so that I can entertain you and "!shower you with gifts and presents

:The old lady said

اِنّا لاَ نَطلُبُ عَلىَ الضَّيفِ جزاَءً

Neither do we seek any reward from our guests nor do we sell bread for money, and“ ”.she refused to accept anything from me

Witnessing this generosity, I realized that they were far more generous and .munificent than me

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Suratul Anfal (٨), vol. ٤٧ -١

Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. ٢, pg. ٣٧٦ -٢

Tadhkeratul Haqa`iq, pg. ٤٨ -٣

Shanidaniha-e-Tarikh, pg. ٣٦٢, Mahajjatul Baidha, vol. ٦, pg. ٢٠٧ -٤

Qasas al-'Ulama, pg. ٣٣٦ -٥

Sima-e-Farzanegan, pg. ١٤٧; Bidadgaran-e-Aqalim-e-Qiblah, pg. ١٤ -٦

Suratul A'raf (٧), Verse ٣٢ -٧

Ba Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Konim, pg. ١٦٩; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ٤٧, pg. ٣٦٠ -٨

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ٩, pg. ١٧٣; Muntakhab Qawamis al-Durar, pg. ١٤٤ -٩

(Pand-e-Tarikh, vol. ١, pg. ٣٥; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ١٨, pg. ٥٢٣ (Old Publication -١٠

Suratul Nur (٢٤), Verse ٢ -١١

Tafsir Mu'in, pg. ٣٦٦ -١٢

Shaytan, vol. ١, pg. ٥٦٠ -١٣

(.A free non-Muslim subject living in a Muslim country. (Tr -١٤

(.Covenant of protection. (Tr -١٥

Qadhawat-ha-e-Muhayyir al-'Uqul, pg. ٤٥; Dastan-ha-e-Zindagi-e-'Ali , pg. ١٤٥ -١٦

Shaytan, vol. ١, pg. ٦٧٨ -١٧

Tarikh-e-Anbiya, vol. ٢, pg. ٢٨٤ -١٨

Alam-e-Barzakh, pg. ٤١; Kashkul (of Sheikh Bahai), vol. ١, pg. ٢٣٢' -١٩

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ٣, pg. ١٣٨; Tafsir al-Manar, under the discussion - ٢٠ .related to verse ١٠٤ of Surat Ale 'Imran

Suratul Lail (٩٢), Verse ٥-٧ -٢١

Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. ١, pg. ٣٠٨ -٢٢

Sima-e-Farzanegan, pg. ٣٥٧ -٢٣

al-Hikayat, pg. ۲۱۴

Allah Loves Generosity (۳

Once, a group of people from Yemen arrived in the presence of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w). Amongst them was a person who, despite being eloquent in speech, spoke with the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) more harshly and discourteously than the rest, such that eventually the Prophet became enraged - the vein of his forehead swelling up .and the colour of his face transforming

At that moment) Jibra`il descended and said: "Your Lord sends His greetings and) :Says

هَذَا رَجُلٌ سَخِيٌّ يُطْعِمُ الطَّعَامَ

"'.This man is generous by nature and feeds the people'

As soon as he heard this, his (s.a.w) anger subsided and he said: "Had it not been for the fact that Jibra`il had informed me on behalf of Allah - the Mighty, the Glorious - that you are a person, who is generous and feeds the people, I would have expelled you from my presence such that your instance would have served as an example for "!the others

The man from Yemen said: "Does your Allah love generosity?" When the Noble :Prophet (s.a.w) replied in the affirmative, the Yemeni declared

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَ أَنَّكَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

I bear witness that there is no creature or entity worthy of worship except for Allah" ".and that you are His Messenger

Then continuing, he said: "By the Allah, Who has sent you in Truth, I have never ".turned away anyone from my wealth

Three Hundred Gold Coins (۴

Ibn Abbas narrates: "Once, three hundred gold coins were gifted to the Noble Prophet

(s.a.w) which he in turn gifted to the Commander of the Faithfuls(a.s). As the Imam (a.s) took them, he declared: “By Allah! I shall surely give this amount in charity in a manner such that it shall be accepted by Allah.”

Later, Imam ‘Ali (a.s) narrates: “That night, after having offered the 'Isha prayer, I picked up one hundred gold coins and came out of the mosque. As I did so, I happened to encounter a woman and so handed over the money to her. In the morning the people were found to be talking amongst themselves, saying: “Last night ‘Ali (a.s) gave a hundred gold coins in charity to an adulteress.” I was greatly distressed to hear this.

The following night, after the 'Isha prayer, I picked up another hundred gold coins and came out of the mosque saying to myself: “By Allah! Tonight I shall give this in charity such that Allah shall accept this act from me.

As I emerged from the mosque, I found myself face to face with a man and handed over the money to him.”

At daybreak the talk amongst the inhabitants of Madinah was: “‘Ali (a.s) has given a hundred gold coins to a thief, and I became immensely despondent.”

The third night I picked up another hundred gold coins and said to myself: “By Allah! I shall surely give these hundred gold coins in charity to such a person, that Allah shall accept my charity.

After the 'Isha prayer, coming out of the mosque, I ran into a man and handed him the money. In the morning, the people of Madinah were found saying: “Last night ‘Ali (a.s) gave a hundred gold coins to a rich and wealthy person.”

I was extremely pained to hear this and so, approaching the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), I informed him of the incidents that had taken place.

Having heard me, he (s.a.w) said: “O' ‘Ali! Jibrail says: “Allah, the Exalted, has accepted your charities and considers them to be pure. (As for) the hundred gold coins that you had given to the immoral lady on the first night - returning home she turned to Allah in

repentance over her past misdeeds and mended her ways. She has set aside the gold coins as her capital and is on the lookout for a husband.

The hundred gold coins of the second night had reached a thief who, upon reaching home, repented over his wrong-doings and utilized the amount for engaging in trade.

The hundred gold coins of the third night had reached the hands of a wealthy person, who had not been paying his zakat for years. Reaching home he began to censure himself saying: "How lowly and base can you be? While you have been violating Allah's ruling and not been paying the obligatory zakat for several years, 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, despite not possessing anything, has given you a hundred gold coins." Having rebuked himself, he then calculated his unpaid zakat of several years and disbursed it."

It was due to this act on the part of Imam 'Ali (a.s) that Allah revealed the following verse in his (a.s) excellence:

رِجالٌ لا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجارَةٌ وَ لا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللّهِ وَ إِقامِ الصَّلاهِ وَ إِيتاءِ الزَّكاهِ يَخافُونَ يَوْماً تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَ الْأَبْصارُ

"Men whom neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of poor-rate; they fear a day in which the hearts and eyes shall turn about."(۱)

۵) The Extremely Generous Companion

Qais was the son of Sad Ibn Ubadah, the chief of the tribe of Khazraj and one of the companions of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w). He never reneged his pledge of allegiance to the Commander of the Faithfuls(a.s) and supported him through thick and thin - transferring his loyalties to Imam Hasan (a.s) after the martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithfuls(a.s).

Qais, his father Sad and his grandfather Ubadah had possessed a public rest-house. In one of the battles during the time of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), he was part of the army in which Abu Bakr and Umar were also present. Sad would borrow money from his friends and spend it over his fellow-companions. Abu Bakr and Umar discussed amongst themselves: "If we allow him act in this fashion he shall soon squander away

his father's property", and so they announced in public: "No one should lend money to ".Qais

When his father came to know of this he, after having recited the congregational prayers behind the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), stood up and said: "I complain before the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and the people that Abu Bakr and Umar shall turn my son into a "!miser

In one of the battles he was appointed commander of the army. In that expedition which lasted for a few days he sacrificed nine camels for his fellow-companions, who were very few in number. When the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) was informed of this, he "!said: "Generosity is the conduct of this family

When he fell ill very few people came to visit him. This surprised him and he sought to know the reason for this, whereupon he was informed: "The reason for this is that a lot of your wealth lies with the people. Being indebted to you, they are ashamed to "!present themselves before you

Hearing this Qais said: "May destruction strike the wealth that brings about separation amongst the brethren-in-faith!" Then, upon his instructions, it was announced in Madinah: "Whoever possesses any money belonging to Qais is henceforth the owner ".of that money for Qais has gifted the money to him

After this announcement the crowd that had flocked to his house was so great that (the stairs leading up to Qais" room broke down and collapsed.(٢

Polytheism .۴۹

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

(Do not associate aught with Allah; most surely polytheism is a grievous iniquity."(٣"

:Imam Baqir (a.s) said

أَلْمَعَاصِیَ الَّتِـــــی یَرتَکِبُونَ فَهِیَ شِرْکُ طاَعَهٍ أَطاَعُوا فِیهاَ الشَّیطاَنَ

The commitment of sins on the part of people is (in reality) polytheism with respect to" (obedience (of Allah) - in which they obey the Satan."(۴

Short Explanation

One of the vices of the soul is polytheism in which a person, as a result of ignorance, poverty, scepticism and the like, attributes "Allah-ship" to certain things that do not possess the merit and the ability to be Allah; or regards someone, other than Allah, to be inherently and independently efficacious (in affairs); invokes someone, other than Allah, during worship; or intermingles some other (non-divine) intention and objective .with his acts of worship

A polytheist's act of resorting to someone other than Allah is a sin; increase in polytheistic beliefs is brought about by the deceptions of the Satan and persistence of such views lead to hypocrisy and the nullification of deeds, which in turn bring about (damnation in this world and the hereafter.(۵

The Extremist Who Considered Himself a Shia (۱

Sahl Ibn ZiyadAdmi relates: "Some of our friends wrote a letter to Imam Askari (a.s) saying: "'Ali Ibn Hasakah claims to be one of your friends and followers, but is of the belief that you are Allah and he is the 'door' that leads to you and the Noble Prophet (s.a.w). He is of the opinion that prayers, fasts, zakat and Hajj are nothing but your marifat and according to him, whoever holds this belief is a true and perfect Mu'min and is then relieved of the responsibility of performing the other acts like prayers and ".fasts

In reply, the Imam (a.s) wrote: "'Ali Ibn Hasakah lies. May the curse of Allah be upon him! I do not consider him to be of my friends. By Allah! Muhammad (s.a.w) and the prophets before him had been sent to preach monotheism and invite the people towards prayers, fasts, zakat, Hajj and wilayah. Never did Muhammad (s.a.w) ever

invite anyone towards polytheism, and all of us are the successors of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and the servants of Allah, and never do we ascribe partners to Him. If you happen to see one of them, smash his head by means of a stone (due to his polytheistic views).""

Ali Ibn Hasakah was of the Ghulat (The Extreme Shiites), who possessed deviated' beliefs and had nurtured students such as Qasim Sharani, Yaqtini, Ibn Baba and Muhammad Ibn Musa Sharifi. The Imam (a.s) his rejection of their polytheistic beliefs when he announced: "I absolve myself from them; May Allah curse them!"(6)

2) A Polytheist Turns Into a Believer

Shabih Ibn Uthman was a polytheist whose father and brother had been killed by the Muslims in the battle of Uhud. He awaited an opportunity to kill the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and thus avenge the death of his father and brother.

Years passed and in the year 8 ah the battle of Hunain loomed. During that crisis, Shabih said to himself: "This is an excellent opportunity," and readied himself for battle. In the battle he advanced forward and positioned himself behind the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) in order to execute his sinister intention.

Allah informed the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) of his evil designs whereupon the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) immediately turned around and striking Shabih's chest with his fist, said: "O' Shabih! I seek shelter in Allah from your evils."

Shabih relates: "A shiver ran through my body. I looked at the face of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and at that very moment I felt as if he was the most beloved of all persons to me, to the extent that I even perceived him to be dearer to me than my very own eyes and ears. At that very moment I bore witness to the Unity of Allah and the Prophethood of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and became a Muslim, after which, I said to him (s.a.w): "I bear witness that Allah informed you of my concealed intentions."'(7)

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w), placing his hand upon my chest, prayed: "O' Lord! Ward the Satan away from him."

After the battle had concluded, he (s.a.w) said to me: "What Allah had desired for you (is better than what you had desired for yourself."" (٨)

Concealed Polytheism (٣

Abu Said al-Khudri narrates: "We were a few individuals, who, in a difficult and dangerous period, had shouldered the responsibility of guarding the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) in turn and according to a pre-determined schedule. After a period, some of us had become accustomed to speaking to each other softly and in whispers, including .myself

One night the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) approached us and, noticing some of us talking secretly and in whispers, said to us: "What is this secret conversation? Have you not been prohibited from this act? (when you confer together in private, do not give to (each other counsel of sin and revolt and disobedience to the Messenger)."" (٩)

We pleaded: "We seek the forgiveness of Allah and His Prophet, (however), we were ".discussing about Dajjal

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said: "Should I inform you of one, whom I regard to be more dangerous than Dajjal?" He then said: "Concealed polytheism - that is, a person becomes a cause for the sins and evils of others. Danger from such a person is (greater than that from Dajjal." (١٠)

Disbelief and Polytheism (۴

After the death of Hisham Ibn Abdul Malik - the Umayyad Caliph, Walid Ibn Yazid took over the reins of the Caliphate in the year ١٢۵ ah. He was of those, about whom the :Noble Prophet (s.a.w) had prophesized

هُوَ اَشَدُّ هَذِهِ الأُمَّهِ مِن فِرعَون لِقَومِه.

From this Ummah there shall ascend to the caliphate a person, who shall be worse" ".than what Firawn had been with respect to his people

Walid, who was perpetually in a state of intoxication, used to say: "Who has ever said

that Prophethood has been for the Hashemites? Essentially, there has neither been any Revelation nor any Book from Allah."

Once, the muezzin's recitation of the Adhan for the morning prayers aroused the inebriated Walid, who had been sleeping with his slave-girl, who too was in a state of intoxication. Waking up, he had sexual intercourse with her and then swore that he would make her

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۱- Islam Wa Mustamandan, pg. ۹۰; Dastan-ha-e-Zindagi-e-'Ali, pg. ۱۶۵

۲- Paighambar Wa Yaran, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۶۵; Qamus al-Rijal, vol. ۷, pg. ۳۹۹

۳- Surat Luqman (۳۱), Verse ۱۳

۴- Shaytan, vol. ۱, pg. ۶۹۷

۵- Ihya al-Quloob Dar Darman-e-Sifat-e-Radhilah (a work of this author), pg. ۲۲

۶- Shagirdan-e-Maktab-e-Aimmah, pg. ۱۳; Rijal Kashi, pg. ۴۳۵

۷- Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani

۸- Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۲۱, pg. ۱۵۶

۹- Suratul Mujadilah (۵۸), Verse ۹

۱۰- Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۱۰, pg. ۶۵, Tafsir Qurubi, vol. ۹

lead the congregational prayers that morning. Attiring her in his clothes he sent her to the mosque in that state of ceremonial uncleanness where she led the congregation !and the people offered their prayers behind her

One day, seeking an augury (Istikhara) from the Noble Qur`an, the following verse came up before Walid: "But they sought victory and decision (there and then), and frustration was the lot of every powerful obstinate transgressor."(1)

Closing the Qur`an he suspended it as a target and then began shooting arrows at it - striking it with so many arrows that it eventually tore down into pieces. Having done this he shouted: "O' Qur`an! Do you threaten me and refer to me as an "obstinate transgressor"? When the Day of Judgment comes to pass, tell Allah that Walid tore ".me into pieces

The consequence of his disbelief and rebelliousness was that he could only rule for one year - killed in an extremely horrendous fashion, his head was suspended from atop the palace and his impure body buried outside the city.(2)

Debate with the Polytheists (5

Prophet Ibrahim (a.s), in explaining and propagating the concept of monotheism, found himself in persistent conflict with the idolaters - who possessed idols and statues, and the star-worshippers - who claimed Allah-ship for the sun, moon and the stars, and ascribed them as partners to Allah. In Babylon and Carrhae, Ibrahim's second place of migration, they had even constructed temples and figures in the !names of stars, and used to worship them

In connection with his debate with the

١- Surat Ibrahim (١۴), Verse ١۵

٢- Tatimmah al-Muntaha, pg. ٩٠

star-worshippers it has been narrated that once, when the darkness of the night had spread itself over the horizon and Venus had manifested itself, he (a.s) said: “This is my Lord!” When it had set he (a.s) started out in search of it but when he failed to find ”.it, he said to the star-worshippers: “I do not love the Allahs that set

Then he saw the moon rise whereupon he (a.s) said to the people: “This is my Lord,” but when it disappeared from sight, he (a.s) said: “If my Lord does not guide me I shall ”.surely be of the deviated ones

When the sun rose he (a.s) said: “This is my Lord,” but when it set (too) he distanced himself from the beliefs of the disbelievers and polytheists and declared: “I turn my heart and direct my worship towards He, Who has created the heavens and the earth, and I am not of the polytheists. Do you dispute me with respect to the One Allah, who (has guided me aright? I fear not those, whom you regard as partners to Him.”(١

Satan .۵۰

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لِلإِنْسَانِ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

(Surely the Shaitan is an open enemy to man.”(٢“

:Imam Sadiq (a.s) had said

لَيسَ لِإِبلِيسَ أَشَدُّ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَ الْغَضَبَ.

(Iblis does not possess weapons more dangerous than woman and anger.”(٣“

Short Explanation

In opposition to Divine guidance, there exists satanic deviation. Within the human, there is a continuous and persistent combat between the divine forces, meaning .intellect, and the satanic forces, meaning ignorance

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١- Tarikh-e-Anbiya, vol. ١, pg. ١٣۴

٢- Surat Yusuf (١٢), Verse ۵

٣- Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ٧٨, pg. ٢۴۶

is only when the human gains a cognizance of the weapons of the Satan and his forces, and protects himself from their whisperings that he can escape from their snares. And if, at times, the Satan happens to overcome him, he should turn to Allah in repentance and plead for His forgiveness lest his heart gets imprinted with a black .blemish, and seek refuge in Him from his evils

Prophet Nuh and Satan (۱

After Prophet Nuh (a.s) had disembarked from his ark, the Satan approached him and said: "You have greatly obliged me and so I wish to thank you for your obligation and "!give you something in exchange

Nuh (a.s) said: "I am indisposed to the fact that I oblige you and you recompense me ".for it. Anyway, go on and tell me the truth

Satan said: "Indeed I have to strive hard and exert myself before I can lead one person astray, but you cursed the people and all of them were destroyed and so, at least at present, I am at ease till another community is born and reaches the age of !!(responsibility before I invite them towards disobedience (of Allah

Now, in reciprocation of your good deed, I shall give you a word of advice. Stay away from three attributes: Firstly - never exhibit arrogance, for it was because of this vice that I did not prostrate before your father, Adam and was expelled from the presence of Allah. Secondly - stay away from greed, for it was this due to this that Adam

consumed the wheat and was deprived of Paradise. Thirdly - distance yourself from envy, for it was because of this vice that Qabil killed his brother Habil and eventually perished as a result of Divine punishment."(۱)

Prophet Musa and Satan (۲

Once, Satan approached Prophet Musa (a.s) and said to him: "You are the Prophet of Allah while I am one of His sinning and disobedient creations. It is my desire that I repent before Him, so request Him to accept my repentance."

Musa (a.s) agreed and prayed for him, whereupon Allah said: "O' Musa! I shall accept your intercession for him. Tell him to prostrate upon Adam's grave in order that I accept his repentance."

Musa (a.s) met Satan and said: "Prostrating upon Adam's grave shall cause your repentance to be accepted."

Hearing this, Satan said: "I did not prostrate before Adam when he was alive, how can I prostrate upon his grave now that he is dead? I shall never do such a thing!" Then continuing, he said: "O' Musa! Since you interceded for me before Allah you have obliged me. I shall advise you to be wary of me in three places in order that you do not face damnation and ruin. First: During anger; for in that state my soul is in your heart and my eyes into yours. Second: During a battle (jihad); for in that state I cause the soldiers to bring their wives, children and relatives to mind in order that they turn back from the battle and flee away. Third: Never

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۱- Unwan al-Kalam, pg. ۱۶۷

sit with a non-mahram woman in one place for I shall whisper temptations into both of you.”(۱)

۳) Firawn

Once, an inhabitant of Egypt brought a bunch of grapes before Firawn and asked him to transform them into pearls.

Firawn took the grapes inside his chamber and sat down pondering as to how he could transform them into pearls. In the meantime Satan arrived and knocked at his door. Firawn asked: “Who is it?” Satan replied: “Woe unto that Allah, who knows not who stands behind the door.” Having said this he stepped into the chamber, took the grapes from Firawn and recited one of the Holy Names of Allah upon them whereupon they were immediately transformed into pearls.

Then, turning to Firawn, he said: “O' Firawn! Judge with fairness and justice! Despite possessing such virtues and powers I am not worthy of being worshipped, but you, with the ignorance that you possess, claim Allah-ship for yourself and say: 'I am the great Allah of the people?'”

Firawn inquired: “Why did you not prostrate beforeAdam so as not to be expelled from the presence of Allah?”

Satan retorted in disgust: “Because I knew that a dirty entity like you would come into existence from his loins.”(۲)

۴) Muawiyah

It has been reported that Muawiyah had been asleep in his palace when he was suddenly awakened by someone. When Muawiyah looked towards him, the person immediately concealed himself behind the curtains.

Muawiyah shouted: “Who are you that have entered the palace without my permission and exhibited such impertinence?”

The man said: “I am

۱- Shanidaniha-e-Tarikh, pg. ۲۵۸; Mahajjatul Baidha, vol. ۵, pg. ۵۹

۲- Pand-e-Tarikh, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۳; Anwar al-Nu'maniyyah, pg. ۸۰. This incident has been narrated slightly differently, in the book, Jawame' al-Hikayat, pg. ۲۱

".Satan

"?Muawiyah asked: "Why did you wake me up

He replied: "It is time for prayers and I have aroused you so that you can proceed to "!the mosque in time for the prayers

Muawiyah said: "You are Satan, and Satan is an entity who never desires any good for the people. Is it correct to accept a thief's claim that he had come to the house for the "?purpose of guarding it

Satan said: "I woke you up lest you continue to sleep and your prayers become lapsed thereby causing you to sigh in regret and your heart to grieve that the time for prayers had passed away and you did not go to the mosque for offering your prayers! This sigh is more significant and important than hundreds of prayers and I did not want you to engage yourself in such sighing and lamentations, for then you would ".have been graced by Allah's mercy

(Having heard this Muawiyah attested the veracity of his words.(١

Prophet Yahya and Satan (۵

Once, the accursed Satan manifested himself before the Prophet Yahya Ibn Zakariya (a.s). Observing that he had in his possession numerous ropes, Yahya (a.s) inquired: "?"O' Iblis! What are these ropes that you hold in your hand

Satan replied: "These ropes are the various attachments, inclinations and lusts that I ".have found in the children of Adam

'?Yahya (a.s) asked: 'Does there exist a rope for me too

Satan said: 'Yes. When you satiate yourself with food, you experience weightiness and it is for this reason you become disinclined with respect to your

'.prayers, dhikr and supplications

'.Hearing this, Yahya (a.s) vowed: 'By Allah! Never shall I eat to my fill, ever again

(Iblis responded by pledging: "By Allah! Never shall I advise anyone, ever again."(١

Patience .۵۱

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَاصْــبِرْ كَماَ صَبَرَ أُولُوا الْعَزمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ

Therefore bear up patiently as did the messengers endowed with faithfulness bear"
(up with patience."(٢

:Imam 'Ali (a.s) said

حَلاوَةُ الظَّفَرِ تَمْحُوا مَرارَةَ الصَّــبْرِ.

(The sweetness of success erases the bitterness of patience."(٣"

Short Explanation

For some, the initial phase of patience is bitter while its final phase is sweet, while for others, its initial as well as its final phase is bitter, while for yet others, patience, in all .phases, is sweet

One who exhibits patience willingly, refrains from complaining before the others and does not fret and fume, is of the Patient Ones, while one, who is not forbearing in the face of misfortunes and does not beseech and supplicate to Allah, is regarded as .being of the Impatient Ones

It is in the face of misfortune and calamity that a truly patient person is differentiated from a false claimant. A patient person is submissive in the face of adversities while (one who claims falsely is overcome with perturbation, anguish and sorrow.(۴

One day the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), accompanied by the Commander of the Faithfuls(a.s), had been heading towards the mosque of Quba when they happened to come across a lush-green garden. Witnessing it Imam 'Ali (a.s) commented: "O Prophet of Allah! It is a nice garden." The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) responded: "Your garden in

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Iblis Nameh, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۵; Mahasin Barqi, pg. ۴۳۹ -۱

Suratul Ahqaf (۴۶), Verse ۳۵ -۲

Ghurar al-Hikam, tr. ۴۸۸۲ -۳

Tadhkeratul Haqa`iq, pg. ۸۶ -۴

"!Paradise is nicer

They passed by the garden and continued on their way; in the course of their walk they passed by seven gardens and on each occasion the same conversation ensued between the two. Then, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) took 'Ali (a.s) into his arms and began weeping intensely, causing the Imam (a.s) to weep too. When he (a.s) sought to know the reason for the Noble Prophet's (s.a.w) weeping, he (s.a.w) said: "I suddenly recollected the malice that has taken root in the breasts of the people towards you ".and which they shall make manifest after my death

The Imam (a.s) inquired: "O Prophet of Allah! What should I do?" He (s.a.w) advised: "Patience and fortitude. If you fail to exhibit patience you shall fall into far greater ".difficulties

He (a.s) said: "Do you fear the destruction of my faith and religion?" He (s.a.w) replied: ("Your (faith and religion's) existence lies in patience."(١

Ease After Patience (٢

The only son of an indigent woman had gone on a journey which had transformed into a protracted one. Extremely worried, she approached Imam Sadiq (a.s) and complained: "My son has been away on a journey, which has turned into a very long ".one and I am terribly distressed

".The Imam (a.s) said: "O' Lady! Be patient and control yourself

The lady left, but after having waited for a few more days and with no sign of her son's arrival she was not able to take it any more and so, approaching the Imam (a.s) again, she said: "My son has

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Dastan-ha-e-Zindagi-e-'Ali, pg. ٩٧ (a work of this author, published by Intesharat- -١ e-Nasir, Qum); Aine-e-Dil; Manaqib (of Ibn Shahr Ashub), vol. ١, pg. ٣٢٢

”?still not returned. What should I do

The Imam (a.s) said to her: “But did I not advise you to be patient and exhibit fortitude.” She lamented: “By Allah! I have reached the limit of my patience and do not ”!possess the strength to bear this separation any more

”.Hearing this, the Imam (a.s) said: “Return home for your son has arrived

Confounded, she returned to her house only to find her son back from his journey. Even as she was overjoyed at seeing him, she thought to herself: “How did the Imam (a.s) know that he had returned? Does Revelation descend upon him? Let me go and ”.ask him about this issue

Approaching the Imam (a.s) she asked: “Just as you had informed, my son has returned from his journey. But tell me, do you receive revelation that you were able to ”?inform me of the unseen

He (a.s) said: “I deduced this from one of the traditions of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w). :He (s.a.w) had said

عِندَ فَناَءِ الصِّبرِ ياتي الْفَرَجُ

When man's patience reaches its end, ease and relief sets in upon him.” When I“ observed that your patience had reached its termination, I realized that relief had arrived and so informed you that your son had arrived and my deduction proved to be (correct.'”(۱

The Patience and Fortitude of Bilal (۳

Bilal was originally from Abyssinia and in Madinah, was one of the slaves of the tribe of Bani Jama.' After he had embraced Islam he had to suffer intense hardships at the .hands of his owners

During the onset of Islam

Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۴۷, Layali al-Akhbar, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۶۶ -۱

those in Mecca who had embraced the faith had to face great adversities - especially those, who did not possess any familial or tribal support, or were slaves and servants. Some, due to the intensity of sufferings, even backtracked from their (new) religion but Bilal exhibiting great patience, increased in steadfastness as thus, his owners .increased their torture upon him

Abu Jahl would force him to lie on his stomach on the hot sands of Hijaz, pin him down by means of a millstone till his brains would almost come to a boil due to the intensity of the heat and then say to him: "Deny the Allah of Muhammad!" However, all that Bilal .would say was: "Ahad Ahad" - meaning Allah is One

One of those, who greatly persecuted him, was Umayyah Ibn Khalaf, who used to torture him repeatedly. However, as Divine decree would have it, he was killed in the .battle of Badr at the hands of Bilal

During one of those occasions when Bilal was being tortured, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) happened to pass by. Witnessing him, he (s.a.w) said to Abu Bakr: "Had I possessed money, I would have purchased Bilal." Later he (s.a.w) approached his uncle Abbas and said: "Purchase Bilal for me." Even as Abbas went in search of the woman who owned him, Bilal was being subjected to torture and persecution - .pinioned under the weight of heavy stones and almost on the verge of death

Abbas approached the woman and expressed his desire to purchase

Bilal whereupon she began to criticize and speak ill of him, but eventually sold him. Thus, Bilal, as a result of his patience in the face of torture and persecution, became free and entering into the services of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) he became his muezzin.(۱)

Patience is Better than Retaliation (۴

When the battle of Uhud had concluded, the Noble Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) dispatched Harith Ibn Samt to search for the body of his uncle, Hamzah, amongst the dead. When Harith witnessed that Hamzah's liver had been taken out and his body mutilated by cutting off the ears, nose and other parts of the body, he could not bring himself to inform the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) of this unpleasant occurrence.

As a result, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) himself arrived amongst the dead, but when his eyes fell upon the mutilated body of his uncle, he was immensely disturbed. As he wept, he said: "By Allah! Nothing has disturbed me more than this. If Allah grants me dominance over the Quraish, I shall mutilate seventy of their individuals."

At that moment, Jibrail descended with the following verse: "And if you take your turn, then retaliate with the like of that with which you were afflicted; but if you are patient, it will certainly be best for those who are patient," whereupon the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said: "I shall exhibit patience over this calamity."

The person who killed Hamzah was Wahshi - the slave of Jubair - who, upon the orders of Hind (Muawiyah's mother. Her

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۱- Paighambar Wa Yaran, vol. ۲, pg. ۶۶; Asad al-Ghabbah, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۰۶

father, 'Atabah, had been killed in the battle of Badr) had torn open Hamzah's stomach, pulled out his liver and presented it to her. Taking the liver she bit into it, but by Divine decree was unable eat it. Arriving at Hamzah's body, she went on to mutilate it and then rewarded Wahshi by gifting him her necklace, bracelet and ear-rings.(۱)

The Wedding Night (۵

Sibt al-Sheikh has narrated: "One of the elders of Arabia - the chief of a tribe that dwelled in the environs of Baghdad, decided to marry his son to a maiden from amongst his relatives. As per the custom prevalent there, the marriage and its consummation was supposed to take place on the same night. On the appointed night preparations were made for feast and entertainment, and the supreme religious authority of the Arab world - Sheikh Mahdi Khalisi, was invited to recite the marriage formula.

Some of the youths proceeded towards the bridegroom in order bring him to the marriage gathering in a special ceremony and with special formalities. As was their custom, they began firing bullets into the air and in the process a bullet from the gun of one of the youths - a Sayyid (descendant of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w)) - accidentally struck the bridegroom in the chest and killed him.

Witnessing this, the Sayyid youth ran away and the episode was brought to the attention of the bridegroom's father. The late Sheikh Mahdi Khalisi, coming to know of the incident, instructed the father to exhibit patience and

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۱- Muntakhab al-Tawarikh, pg. ۵۱

advised: “Do you know that the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) has a great obligation upon us and all of us are in need of his intercession; this youth did not do this intentionally but it was by providence that the bullet happened to strike your son killing him. Forgive this youth for the sake of his grandfather (s.a.w) and exhibit patience over this misfortune so that Allah grants you the rewards of the Patient Ones!”

Upon hearing the Sheikh's counsel the father of the bridegroom became silent and after little reflection said: “We have numerous guests now and the occasion of joy has been transformed into an occasion of grief. For completing the right of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), call the Sayyid youth and instead of my son, marry him to the maiden and lead them to the bridal chamber!”

The Sheikh praised and commended him (for this gesture of his). When the people went after the Sayyid youth and informed him that he was to get married in place of the chief's son he initially refused to believe it, thinking it to be a ploy to seize him and kill him.

However, ultimately the Sheikh married the maiden to the Sayyid youth on that night itself, while the dead son was buried the next day.”(١)

٥٢. Charity

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِیَ

“If you give alms openly, it is well.”(٢)

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said:

تَصَدِّقُوا وَ لَو بِتَمرَهٍ.

“Give charity, even if it happens to be a (piece of) date.”(٣)

Short Explanation

Charity is of two

۱- Dastan-ha-e-Shigaft, pg. ۲۵۵

۲- Suratul Baqarah (۲), Verse ۲۷۱

۳- Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۴۵

kinds: The first being the “concealed charity” – one that had been the conduct of the Imams and which wards away poverty, lengthens the life, does away with seventy kinds of evil deaths and smothers the Divine wrath. The second being the “manifest charity” – one, that increases the sustenance and breaks Satan's back.

An important point in connection with charity is that quantity (with respect to money, clothes or food) is not the criterion for perfection; rather, it is the purity and sincerity of intention, which is the requisite for perfection.

At times when the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) did not possess any money, he would give his clothes in charity and would recommend: “Commence your day with charity, for it serves to insure you.”

Auspicious and Inauspicious Times (۱

Once, Imam Sadiq (a.s) related: “There was a piece of land that I owned in partnership with an astrologer and it was mutually decided that it should be divided between us. He made preparations so that his arrival should be in an auspicious hour while I should arrive in an inauspicious hour so that the better portion of the land fell in his hands. The land was divided but it so happened that the better portion came as my share of the land! The man slapped his right hand over his left in regret and said ruefully: “Oh! Had I never lived to see such a day!”

I said to him: “Why are you so upset today?” He said: “I am an astrologer and I brought you out of

your house in an inauspicious hour while I myself came out in an auspicious hour. However, now that the land has been divided, you have come to acquire the better ".portion of it

I (the Imam) said: "I shall inform you of a tradition of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) wherein he said: 'If one desires that Allah wards away from him the inauspiciousness of a day, he should start his day by giving charity, and if one desires to ward away the "'.inauspiciousness of the night, he should commence his night by giving charity

The Imam (a.s) then said (to the astrologer): "I gave charity while coming out (of my (house) today; charity is better for you than astrology."(۱)

Hatim's Mother (۲

Atbah Beente 'Afif, the mother of Hatim Tai, was an open-hearted and generous lady,' .who used to distribute all her wealth amongst the needy ones

When her brothers saw her giving her wealth in charity, they prevented her from ".accessing it and said: "You are indulging in extravagance and ruining your property

For a period of one year they did not provide her with any money. When the year had passed they spoke amongst themselves and said: "She has suffered much in this year as a result of scarcity and perhaps now, after this prohibition, she would spend her wealth moderately and not exhibit extravagance." And so, they gave her a herd of .camels so that she could make use of them

At that juncture a woman from the tribe of Hawazan approached her and, as in

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Ba Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Konim, pg. ۱۳۵; al-Kafi, vol. ۴, pg. ۶ -۱

.the past, sought food and assistance from her

Hatim's mother gifted the entire herd of camels to her saying: "In this period (of one year), I have tasted the sufferings of poverty and have promised to myself that whatever I come to possess, I shall give in charity to the needy and the deprived (ones!"(۱

In the Darkness of the Night (۳

Mu'alla Ibn Khunais narrates: "One rainy night Imam Sadiq (a.s) started out from his house with the intention of proceeding towards the tent of the tribe of Bani Sai'dah (under which they used to gather in the heat of the day, while it would be utilized as a .(sleeping place by the travelers and the indigent ones, during the night

I followed the Imam (a.s) when I noticed that something had suddenly fallen out of his hands. He (a.s) supplicated: "O' Allah! Return to me that which has fallen." I advanced nearer and saluted him at which he questioned: "Mu'alla?" I said: "Yes. May I be made your ransom!" The Imam (a.s) said to me: "Move your hand over the ground and hand ".over to me whatever you happen to find

As I moved my hand over the ground I found some pieces of bread scattered around; gathering them all, which eventually became a sack-full, I handed them to him (a.s) and said: "May I be made your ransom. Allow me to carry the sack upon my back." He (a.s) said: "No. I am more deserving of carrying the sack, but yes, I do permit you to ".accompany me

,Thus

Jawame' al-Hikayat, pg. ۲۴۸ -۱

together with the Imam (a.s), I reached the tent of Bani Sai'dah, where a group of poor people lay asleep. The Imam (a.s) began placing one or two pieces of bread .below their garments till all the pieces of bread were used up

As we turned back, I said to him: "May I be made your ransom! Are they Shiites?" The :Imam (a.s) replied

لَو عَرَفُوه لَوَاسَينَاهُم بِالدُّقِّه

Had they been Shiites, I would have provided them with all that they needed - even" (their salt."(1)

The Mother of the Satans (4

Sayyid Ne'matullah Jazairi narrates in his book: "One year, a famine struck. During that period a preacher, from atop the pulpit in the mosque, preached: "When one desires to give charity, seventy Satans cling onto his hands to prevent him from giving ".it

Hearing this, a person said to his friends in amazement: "Giving charity has no such thing associated with it. I have some wheat present in my house which I shall ".immediately bring to the mosque and distribute amongst the poor

With this in mind, he set off for his house. When he reached home and informed his wife of his intention, she began to reprimand him saying: "In this period of drought do you not have consideration for your wife and child? Maybe the drought will extend for "... a long time, in which case we shall die of hunger and

In short, she rebuked him to such an extent that eventually the man returned to the .mosque empty-handed

His friends asked him: "What happened? Did you see how

Muntahal A'mal, vol. 2, pg. 127 -1

(seventy Satans clung to your hand and prevented you?"(1

The man said: "Honestly speaking, I did not see the Satans, but I certainly saw their (mother, who prevented me from performing this good deed.""(2

The Widely Respected Shia Government Minister (5

Perhaps, the only Shiite minister to have been widely popular amongst the people of all classes was Sahib Ibn Ubbad (326 ah to 385 ah). Initially he had been the minister of Muayyad al-Daulah Dailami (d. 373 ah), after whose death, he became the minister of .Muayyad's brother, Fakhr al-Daulah

Sheikh Saduq compiled the book 'Uyoon Akhbar al-Ridha for him while Husain Ibn .Muhammad Qummi authored the book Tarikh Qum upon his orders

During the period when he was the minister, it was not possible for one who came to him in the afternoon of the month of Ramadhan, to leave except after consuming iftar - at times the people breaking their fast at his place totaled one thousand in number. His charity in this holy month would equal that of all the other months combined as it .was from his infancy that his mother had trained him to act in such a manner

During his childhood, when he would start out for his classes, his mother would give him a dinar and a dirham everyday and advise him: "Give (these in) charity to the first .needy you come across!" This act transformed itself into a habit for him

From his childhood to youth and then on until he became a minister, he never .disregarded the recommendation and training of his mother

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1- The Noble Prophet said: O' 'Ali! Do you know that alms does not go out of the hands of a Mumin, except that seventy Satans, attempt to dissuade him, by various means from giving it. Wasail al-Shi'a, vol. 6, pg. 257

2- Iblis Nameh, pg. 60; Anwar al-Nu'maniyyah, vol. 3, pg. 96

Fearful of forgetting this recommendation, he instructed the slave, who was in-charge of his quarters, to place one dinar and one dirham under his mattress every night. Upon waking up in the morning, he would give them in charity to the first needy .he encountered

It so happened that one night the servant forgot to place the money. The next morning Sahib Ibn Ubbad, upon waking, thrust his hand under the mattress to collect the money only to realize that the servant had forgotten to place the money there. He took this to augur ill for himself and thought: “Surely, my end has drawn nigh that the ”.servant forgot to place the charity

He ordered the blanket, mattress and pillows that lay in his bedroom to be given in charity to the first destitute that came his way as an expiation for the forgetfulness. Having collected all the items - all of which were costly and expensive - he set out of his house, only to encounter an old blind Sayyid (descendant of the Noble Prophet .(s.a.w)), who was shedding tears as his wife led him by the hand

Sahib's servant went forward and asked him: “Will you accept these items?” The man asked: “What are the items?” The servant replied: “A blanket, mattress and some .brocaded pillows.” As soon as he heard this the destitute fell down unconscious

When Sahib Ibn 'Ubbad was informed of this scenario he approached the man and ordered water to be sprinkled over his face. When the man

had regained his consciousness, Sahib asked him: "What caused you to lose consciousness?"

He answered: "I am a respectable person. It is of late that I have fallen into bad times. I have a daughter from this wife who had reached the age of marriage; a person sought her hand in marriage and they were married. It has been two years now that we have been collecting items for her Dowry. Last night my wife said to me: "We must make arrangements for a blanket and brocaded pillows for my daughter." Try as much as I could, I could not get her to change her mind till there ensued a dispute between us over this issue. Finally I said to her: "Tomorrow morning, hold my hand and take me out of the house", so that I could pass in front of you. Then, when your servant spoke those words to me, it was but natural that I should fall down unconscious."

Sahib was greatly affected by this speech. Summoning the daughter's husband, he gave him sufficient wealth so that he could engage himself in a respectable profession, after which, he gave the entire dowry of the daughter in a measure befitting a minister's daughter.(۱)

۵۳. Silah Rahim

point

Silah Rahim (۲)

Allah, the Wise, has said:

فَهَلْ عَسَیْـتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّیْـتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِی الأَرْضِ وَ تَقَطِّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ

"But if you held command, you were sure to make mischief in the land and cut off the ties of kinship."(۳)

Imam Baqir (a.s) said:

صِلَهُ الأَرْحَامِ تَطِیبُ النَّفْسَ وَ تَزِیدُ فِی الرِّزقِ.

Establishing"

۱- Pand-e-Tarikh, vol. ۴, pg. ۱۱۲; Raudhah al-Jannat, pg. ۱۰۵

۲- Establishing bonds of kinship.

۳- Surat Muhammad (۴۷), Verse ۲۲

(the bonds of kinship freshens the soul and increases the sustenance."(1)

Short Explanation

The term "rahim" is used to denote those, who are one's relatives by birth, and it is forbidden to severe one's relationship with them.

Those, who associate with their relatives in a goodly manner and seek to help them, Allah shall lengthen their lives, grant them an increase in their livelihood and subject them to an easy reckoning on the Day of Judgment.

On the other hand those, who distance themselves from their relatives and seek to trouble them shall have to face detrimental consequences for such acts of theirs - destruction of their faith, ruining of their hereafter, lessening of their life-span, diminution in sustenance and, the worst of all, the termination in the bestowal of Divine grace and favour upon them. Allah has mentioned in the 'Hadith-e-Qudsi': "I am the Rahman. One, who severs his relation with his relatives, I shall sever My relation with him."(2)

Plague (1

Once, one of the companions of Imam Sadiq (a.s) said to him (a.s): "My brothers and cousins have made life very difficult for me in my house, to the extent that I lead my life in only one room. If I were to even attempt to complain to them or the governor, they shall take away all the wealth and property that I possess."

The Imam (a.s) said: "Be patient for after adversity you shall be in ease and comfort."

Later, narrating the incident, the man said: "(Paying heed to the Imam's counsel) I decided against initiating

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۱- Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۶۰

۲- Ihya al-Qulub, pg. ۱۲۷

legal proceedings against them. Before long plague struck the region in the year ١٣١ ".ah and all those relatives, who used to trouble him died as a result of it

After a period he presented himself before the Imam (a.s), who inquired: "How are "?your relatives

"!The man replied: "All of them are dead

The Imam (a.s) said: "They died as a result of the inconveniences that they had subjected you to; a punishment for their deeds (for severing the bonds of ".relationship) with respect to you - their relative

The Imam (a.s) then asked: "Did you want them to stay alive and inconvenience you?" (Whereupon the man replied: "By Allah! No."" (١

The Imam's Bonds of Kinship (٢

Hasan Ibn 'Ali, a cousin of Imam Sadiq (a.s), was a courageous, robust and physically powerful person such that he was referred to as the lance of the family of Abu Talib. .Possessing a wide nose, he was popularly known as Hasan Aftas

He was the standard-bearer in the uprising initiated by 'Abdullah Mahdh (the grandson of Imam Hasan (a.s)) against Mansur Dawaniqi. His relations with Imam Sadiq (a.s) turned sour over the issue and he even went to the extent of attacking him .((a.s) with a large knife with the intention of killing him (a.s

Salimah, one of Imam's (a.s) slave-girls, relates: "The Imam (a.s) was on his death-bed and I was at his bedside, nursing him, when he suddenly dropped into unconsciousness. As soon as he had regained his consciousness, he instructed me: 'Give seventy dinars to Hasan Aftas and such and such

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Shaytan, vol. ١, pg. ٥١٥; al-Kafi -١

".sums to such and such individuals'"

I said to him: "Should we give seventy dinars to the person, who had lunged at you with a knife and desired to kill you?"

He (a.s) said: "Do you not desire that I should be one of those about whom Allah says:

وَ الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ ما أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَ يَخافُونَ سُوءَ الْحِسابِ وَ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِغاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَ أَقامُوا الصَّلاةَ وَ أَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْناهُمْ سِرًّا وَ عَلانِيَةً وَ يَدْرَؤُنَ بِالْحَسَنَهِ السَّيِّئَهَ أُولئِكَ لَهُمْ عُقْبَى الدَّار

"And those who join that which Allah has bidden to be joined and have awe of their Lord and fear the evil reckoning. And those who are constant, seeking the pleasure of their Lord, and keep up prayer and spend (benevolently) out of what We have given them secretly and openly, and repel evil with good; as for those, they shall have the (happy) issue of the abode."(۱)

He (a.s) then continued: "Yes, O' Salimah! Allah has created the Paradise and made it pure and fragrant such that its fragrance can be perceived at a distance of two thousand years - but this fragrance shall not reach the person, who has severed ties with his relatives, and one, who has been disowned by his parents."(۲)

۳) Abbas, The Prophet's Uncle

'Abbas, the uncle of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), was a person who exhibited great kindness towards his relatives and thus found himself to be an object of praise and commendation of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), who lauded him by saying:

هَذاَ عَبّاس بنُ

۱- Suratul Ra'd (۱۳), Verse ۲۱-۲۲

۲- Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ۳۰; Al-Ghunyah of (Sheikh) Tusi, pg. ۱۲۸

عَبدِ الْمُطَلِب اَجوَدُ قُرَیش كفًا وَ اَوصَلُها رَحماً

Abbas Ibn 'Abdul Muttalib is the most generous and benevolent towards his relatives“ ”.from amongst all the Quraish

During one of the battles, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) ordered: “Whoever happens to encounter anyone from the Bani Hashim (during the battle) should not kill him, for the ”.Bani Hashim have been made to participate in the battle under compulsion

During the battle of Badr a person by the name of Abu Yasir captured Abbas, who, not intending to resist the capture stood firm and unmoving like a staff. When the battle had concluded the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), for the sake of equity, did not exhibit any .discrimination between Abbas and the other captives

At night all the captives were tied by means of ropes and Abbas was seated near the tent of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w). The moans and groans of Abbas kept reaching his (s.a.w) ears as a result of which, he could not sleep till midnight and kept turning from .one side to another

One of the Muslims, who was near him (s.a.w), inquired: “O' Prophet of Allah! Why do ”?you not sleep

He (s.a.w) replied: “The moans of my uncle Abbas distress me and prevent me from sleeping.” A little later the moans subsided and could not be heard anymore. The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) inquired: “What has happened that I do not hear the moans of my uncle Abbas anymore.” The man said: “I have loosened the ropes that bound him.” :Hearing this, he (s.a.w) instructed

(In that case) loosen the ropes of all the other captives too."(1)"

Non Observance of Silah Rahim and Death (۴

Shoa'ib Aqarquqi narrates: "Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far (a.s) said to me: "Tomorrow, a person by the name of Yaqub - an inhabitant of Maghreb - shall meet you and inquire about me; guide him to my house."

I found the person performing the circumambulation (of the Kabah), and as I inquired about his health, I realized that he appeared to know me and so asked him: "How do you know me?" He said: "A person appeared to me in my dreams and said: "Meet Shoa'ib and ask him whatever you desire to know!" Upon waking up I inquired about you and the people pointed you to me."

I found him to be an intelligent person and upon his request took him to the Imam's (a.s) house. Reaching there, I sought permission to enter the house and the Imam (peace be upon granted) obliged.

As soon as the Imam's (a.s) eyes fell upon him, he (a.s) said: 'O' Yaqub! You arrived here (Mecca) yesterday but on the way, at such and such a place, there ensued a quarrel between you and your brother - to the extent that both of you hurled Abuses and insults at each other. This is neither our conduct nor that of the religion of our forefathers. We do not approve of such a conduct from anybody; fear Allah, Who is One and has no partners. Very soon death shall cause a separation between both of you - a

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1- Paighambar Wa Yaran, vol. ۴, pg. ۸۵; Tabaqat, vol. ۴, pp. ۲-۷

'!consequence of having broken the bond of kinship

'?He said: 'May I be made your ransom! When am I going to die

The Imam (a.s) replied: 'Verily, your end had neared too, but since you resolved your differences with your aunt and re-established your bonds of kinship at such and such '.place, your life has been increased by twenty years

A year later I met Yaqub during the season of Hajj and inquired after his health, whereupon he said: 'On the return journey my brother died before he could reach (home and was buried on the way.'”(١

The Painful Consequence of Breaking Family Ties (۵

The intense slandering with respect to Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far (a.s) that reached the ears of Haroon al-Rashid, the Abbasid caliph, provoked him to say: 'Present before me someone from the descendants of Abu Talib so that I can become aware of his (a.s) '.activities

Haroon's minister, Yahya Barmaki, and some others suggested the name of ‘Ali Ibn .Ismail - the Imam's (a.s) nephew

Upon Haroon's orders, a letter was dispatched to him asking him to present himself before the Caliph in Baghdad. When the Imam (a.s) came to know of this, he called for ”?him and questioned: “Where do you intend to go

”.Ali Ibn Ismail answered: “Baghdad‘

”?The Imam (a.s) inquired: “For what purpose

”.He replied: “I am burdened by great debts

The Imam (a.s) said: “I shall repay your debts and arrange for your expenses”, ”!however ‘Ali Ibn Ismail refused the offer and instead, said: “Advise me

The Imam (a.s) said: “I advise you that you do not associate yourself in

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Muntahal A'mal, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۰۶ -۱

shedding my blood and do not make my children fatherless." Repeating this three .times, he (a.s) presented him with three hundred dinars and four thousand dirhams

Later, when Ismail had left, he (a.s) said to those around him: "His slandering and (vilification shall contribute to my murder."(١

Arriving in Baghdad 'Ali Ibn Ismail went to Yahya Ibn Khalid Barmaki. That night Yahya said to him: "Tomorrow, in the presence of the Caliph, when you are questioned about Musa Ibn Ja'far (a.s), you must say: 'I have never witnessed two caliphs exercising authority at one time - you, in Baghdad and Musa Ibn Ja'far (a.s), in Madinah. He is "'!!about to incite the people into rebelling against you

The next morning, arriving in the presence of the caliph, 'Ali Ibn Ismail maligned and slandered the Imam (a.s) as much as he could. In the course of his talks he even said that people from distant places brought money for him and armed him with weapons, and that he was taking the pledge of allegiance from the people and intended to .establish a separate state and government

Hearing this, Haroon appeared to have been jolted out of sleep; he dismissed him from his presence and sent a sum of four thousand dirhams (or twenty thousand .dirhams according to another report) for him to the place where he had been staying

When the money was brought before him, an intense pain rose up inside his throat and he died then and there - a consequence of having severed

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Muntahal A'mal, vol. ٢, pg. ٢١٣ -١

.(the bond of kinship with his uncle – Musa Ibn Ja’far (a.s

The bags of money were carried back to Haroon's coffers while sorrow and regret (was the only thing that Ismail carried to his grave.”(١

Oppression and Injustice .۵۴

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ سَيَعْلَمُونَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنقَلَبٍ يَنقَلِبُونَ

And they who act unjustly shall know to what final place of turning they shall turn“ (back.”(٢

:Imam Baqir (a.s) said

مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ يَظْلِمُ بِمَظلِمَهٍ إِلاَّ أَخَذَهُ اللهُ تَعالَـى بِهَا فِى نَفْسِهِ أَوْ مَالِهِ.

There is none who commits oppression by means of an (act of) injustice, except that“ (Allah afflicts him or his wealth because of it.”(٣

Short Explanation

Oppression and injustice are, in reality, insubordination to the orders of Allah, acts of transgression and a consequence of transcending the limits of the Shari'ah and the .intellect

All throughout history that which has befallen the weak and the oppressed has been due to the oppression of the oppressors. Power and craving for dominance serve as a .prelude for a disobedient soul to oppress the vulnerable and weak individuals

One who transgresses the Divine limits and is uninhibited with respect to every kind of oppression and injustice such as murder, Abuse, vilification, fornication, rape, usurpation of the property of others, etc... has, in effect, gone out of the bounds of Allah's obedience, drowned himself in carnal desires and become afflicted with the

disease of rebelliousness. Such a person, sooner or later, shall be seized by punishment and retribution, since the lamentations of the weak, oppressed and the orphaned ones possess negative

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Jame' al-Nurain, pg. ۲۴ -۱

Suratul Shua'ra (۲۶), Verse ۲۲۷ -۲

Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۲۰ -۳

(overtones, which manifest themselves in this world and the hereafter.(1)

The Oppression of Dadhanah (1

In Syria. there lived a king by the name of Dadhanah, who was an idol worshipper. Allah sent Prophet Jorjis (a.s) to Dadhanah to advise him and invite him to monotheism, but instead, Dadhanah responded by asking him: "Which city do you come from?" He (a.s) replied: "I am of Roman origin and have come from Palestine."

Upon Dadhanah's orders, Prophet Jorjis (a.s) was imprisoned, his holy body subjected to injuries by means of iron spikes till his flesh fell apart and vinegar poured over the wounds. After this, his thighs, knees, soles of his feet and head were pounded by means of red-hot iron skewers to such an extent that he was on the verge of death.

Allah sent an angel to him (a.s), who said: "Allah says: 'Be patient and happy, and fear not for I am with you and shall deliver you from them. They shall attempt to kill you four times, but I shall ward away the pain and agony of the sufferings from you.'"

The second time Dadhanah ordered that this Prophet's back and stomach should be lashed after which he should be hurled into prison. He then summoned every sorcerer and magician before him and ordered them to use their magic to his benefit against Prophet Jorjis (a.s), but despite their best efforts, their magic failed to have any effect upon him. Having failed in this, they tried to poison him, but Prophet Jorjis (a.s) recited Allah's name

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1- Ihya al-Qulub, pg. ۷۶

.and the poison caused him no harm

One of the magicians said: "Had I fed this poison to all of the inhabitants of the earth, they would have turned blind, their appearances would have changed and all of them would have perished!" Then, repenting over his past misdeeds, he declared his faith in .Prophet Jorjis (a.s), whereupon Dadhanah had him killed

For the umptinth time Dadhanah hurled Prophet Jorjis (a.s) into prison and on this .occasion ordered his body to be cut into pieces and thrown into a well

With the objective of admonishing him, Allah sent down lightening and earthquake, but he refused to heed the warning. Allah sent the angel Mikail, who brought Prophet Jorjis (a.s) out of the well and said to him: "Be Patient," and then conveyed to him glad .tidings of the divine rewards

Once again), Prophet Jorjis (a.s) approached the king and invited him towards) monotheism, but once again he refused. However, on this occasion, the commander of his army together with four thousand people brought faith. Witnessing this, .Dadhanah ordered all of them to be put to death

This time he prepared a tablet out of molten copper and forced Prophet Jorjis (a.s) to lie upon it. He then poured molten lead down his throat and then, lighting up an .inferno, hurled him into it in order that he be burnt to death

This time too, Allah sent Mikail to grant him soundness of health. Having regained his health, Prophet Jorjis (a.s) approaching the king yet again advised him

.to abandon idolatry and invited him towards monotheism

On this occasion, Dadhanah hurled him into a cauldron containing molten lead and sulphur, and ignited a fire under him in order to melt his body with the molten lead and sulphur. Allah sent down the angel Israfil, who issued a shriek causing the cauldron to .topple over and leaving Prophet Jorjis (a.s) safe and unharmed

Having regained his health by the power of Allah, he (a.s) again approached Dadhanah and invited him towards Allah-worship. Frustrated and desperate, Dadhanah ordered all the people to gather together in the desert and kill him in unison, whereupon Prophet Jorjis (a.s) supplicated to Allah and pleaded for patience .and fortitude

The people beheaded him (a.s) and were on their way back when all of them were (seized by an onslaught of Divine chastisement.(۱

Working for the Oppressors (۲

A person, by the name of Muhajir, narrates as follows: "I had gone to Imam Sadiq (a.s) and said to him: "Such and such persons have sent you their salutations." The Imam (a.s) responded in kind, whereupon I said: "They have also requested you to pray for them." He (a.s) inquired: "What is their problem?" I said: "Mansur Dawaniqi has flung ".them into prison

He (a.s) asked: "What did they have to do with Mansur (that he hurled them into "?(prison

I replied: "They used to work for him and one day, in a fit of anger, he hurled them ".behind bars

The Imam (a.s) said: "But had I not prohibited them from working for him (an oppressive and

Hayat al-Qulub, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۷۷ -۱

unjust regime)? Such work entails great danger." Having said this, the Imam (a.s) then prayed: "O' Allah! Repel from them the evils and grant them deliverance."

Muhajir says: "I returned from Mecca and inquired about my friends whereupon I was informed that they had been set free"" - (according to the dates, they had been released three days after the Imam (a.s) had prayed for them).(١)

Retaliation (٣

Once, Hadhrat Musa (a.s) was passing by a region when he came across a spring which flowed alongside a mountain. Performing ablution with the water, he proceeded to the top of the mountain to offer prayers. Meanwhile a person on horseback reached the spring and came down from the horse with the intention of quenching his thirst. When he had satiated himself he mounted his mount and galloped away, dropping his money-pouch in the process.

A short while later a shepherd arrived there; noticing the money-pouch, he picked it up and left.

After the shepherd had left, an old man - a bundle of fire-wood on his head and possessing an appearance that manifested his destitution and poverty - reached there. Placing his load on the ground he stretched himself out near the spring and went to sleep.

Before long the rider returned to the spring and began searching for his lost money-pouch. Failing to locate it, he questioned the old man, who pleaded ignorance about it. There ensued an altercation betwin the two and very soon they began trading blows. In the resulting brawl, the rider beat the

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١- Shanidaniha-e-Tarikh, pg. ٥٧; Mahajjah al-Baidha, vol. ٣, pg. ٢٥۶

.old man so severely that he died

Witnessing this, Prophet Musa (a.s) said: "O' Lord! What kind of incident was this and what kind of justice exists in this episode; the money was taken by the shepherd but it "?was the old man who had to face oppression and injustice

He (a.s) was told: "O' Musa! This old man had killed the rider's father and so retaliation was achieved between them. (In addition) the rider's father had owed to the shepherd's father, the same amount that was contained in the money-pouch and in this way, the shepherd acquired his right. O' Musa! (Do know) I pass My judgment on (the basis of justice and fairness."(۱

The Oppression of Dhahhak Himyari (۴

Having ruled Iran for years, Jamshed slowly came to be filled by pride, ultimately claiming Allah-ship for himself and inviting the people to worship him. The people, out of fear of his sword, submitted to his demand; this continued till Dhahhak initiated a .military expedition against him and eventually killed him

Placing himself at the helm of affairs of the sultanate, Dhahhak adopted a policy of oppression and persecution - killing his father and subjecting his people to various .forms of brutality and tribulation

One day he happened to experience discomfort in his head and shoulders. One evil cook suggested a remedy saying: "The thing that can cure you is the brains of the ".youths

Upon Dhahhak's orders two youths from the prison were killed; eating their brains, he felt slight comfort in his state and so went to sleep. Next

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Pand-e-Tarikh, vol. ۳, pg. ۱۶۱; Shaytan, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۲۴ -۱

day onwards two youths would be killed everyday and their brains utilized for his .treatment

He committed great brutalities, never gave ear to any petition and never meted out justice to any oppressed and so, when he murdered two sons of Kaveh, the ironsmith, .it turned out to be the final straw and provoked a rebellion against him

He was ultimately killed in an extremely gruesome manner – his head bludgeoned by a mace (or hurled into the depths of a well, according to another report), and it was (Faridoon, who later took over the reins of the sultanate.(۱

The Incident of Harrah (۵

After the incident of 'ashura and two and a half months before his death, Yazid initiated yet another horrendous act on the twenty eighth of Dhul Hijjah of the year ۶۳ ah – the looting and killing of the people of Madinah and sacrilege with respect to the shrine of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) at the hands of an old, sick, brash and impudent .man by the name of Muslim Ibn 'Aqabah, notoriously known as Musrif

When the news of Yazid's oppression and depravity reached the ears of the people of Madinah, a group from amongst them proceeded to Syria to obtain first-hand .information regarding the situation

Witnessing his sacrilegious behaviour, they returned to Madinah and drove his governor, 'Uthman Ibn Muhammad, together with Marwan Ibn Hakam and the other Umayyads, out of the city. The people then flocked to 'Abdullah Ibn Handhalah – the 'Ghasil al-Malaikah,(۲)) and pledged allegiance to him. Coming to know of

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Jawame' al-Hikayat, pg. ۵۲ -۱

(.One, whose ablution (ghusl) has bin performed by the angels. (Tr -۲

.this, Yazid dispatched a force under the command of Musrif towards Madinah

In order to defend themselves, the people of Madinah came out of the city and took up positions in a region known as Sangistan, where a fierce battle ensued betwin the two forces. Some of the inhabitants of Madinah were killed while others fled and .(sought shelter in the holy shrine of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w

Musrif's soldiers advanced into Madinah, entered the holy shrine on horseback and began their carnage - killing so many people that the mosque and the holy tomb were covered with blood; the number of people that were killed have been reported to be !around eleven thousand

We state one example of the numerous brutalities committed by the forces of Musrif: One of the soldiers of the army of Yazid, an inhabitant of Egypt, entering the house of a lady from the Ansar (The Helpers), who had recently given birth to a child and which ".was in her arms, said to her: "Bring me all your wealth

The lady said: "By Allah! They have not left behind anything that I can give you." (Hearing this) he said: "I shall kill you and your child." The lady pleaded: "Fear Allah, for this infant is the child of Ibn Abi Kabshah Ansari, the companion of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w)." The name seemed to have no effect upon the merciless man, who, picking up the innocent child by its legs - even as it was being suckled, flung him against

(the wall scattering his brains upon the floor.(1)

In the face of such atrocities(2), all the people of Madinah were forced to pledge allegiance to Yazid, with the exception of two persons – Imam Zainul 'Abidin (a.s) and 'Ali Ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Abbas.

The Imam (a.s) arrived before Musrif after reciting a supplication as a result of which he was so was overcome with dread and awe that he could not get himself to kill the Imam (a.s). As for 'Ali Ibn 'Abdullah, some of his maternal relatives were present in Musrif's army and they prevented him from being killed.(3)

55. Worship

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَ الإِنْسَ إِلاَّ لِيَعْبُدُونَ

"And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me."(4)

Imam Sajjad (a.s) said:

مَنْ عَمِلَ بِمَا افْتَرَضَ اللهُ فَهُوَ مِنْ أَعْبَدِ النَّاسِ.

"One, who performs (all) that Allah has made obligatory upon him, is the most worshipping of all people."(5)

Short Explanation

A Mu'min performs the obligatory and the recommended acts for these are the basis for Allah's obedience and subservience. If one performs these, it is as if he has exhibited his devotion and subservience in entirety.

The best worship is that which is protected from external influences and shielded from internal catastrophes.

Should the deeds of a person be continual and flawless, the person shall be successful

.in his worship, however meagre they might be

Those who seek plain knowledge and mere external excellences but remain heedless of the soul and the reality of worship, do not achieve anything except

p: ۴۲

Madayani reports that in the aftermath of the incident of Harrah thousands of - ۱ unwed maidens gave birth to illegitimate children, who were referred to as 'aulad al-Harrah' (children of Harrah) - a consequence of the transgressions committed by Musrif's soldiers with the maidens and women of Medinah. Tatimmah al-Muntaha, pg. ۳۹

The incident of Harrah has bin reported, in addition to Shiite sources, by the Sunnite -۲ sources as well, such as Kamil (of Ibn Kathir), Maqatil al-Talibin, Kashf al-Astar, Al-Imamah Wa al-Siyasah, Akhbar al-Duwal, Tarikh Masu'di.

Muntahal A'mal, vol. ۲, pg. ۳۴ -۳

Suratul Dhariyat (۵۱), Verse ۵۶ -۴

Shaytan, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۱۳ -۵

(a mould, as far as the worship of the Beneficent Allah is concerned.(۱

The Outcome of 'Dry' Worship (۱

The Kharijites were individuals who as a result of their fanaticism and extremism, had gone greatly astray. Their leader was a person by the name of Hurqus Ibn Zuhair, who, during the time of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), had drowned himself in prayers, fasts and other acts of worship causing many of the Muslims to become fascinated .with him

When the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) had been distributing the spoils of war after the battle of Hunain, this person, who was just an arid and ceremonial worshipper, said to him with great impudence: "O' Muhammad! Conduct yourself with fairness and equality," .and repeated the sentence three times

When he had repeated it for the third time the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) became greatly disturbed and said: "If I do not behave with fairness and equality, then who shall "?behave so

This 'dry' worshipper eventually set out for battle against Imam 'Ali (a.s) in the battle of Nahrawan and was killed. When the Imam's (a.s) eyes fell upon his inauspicious corpse lying amongst the dead, he (a.s) offered a prostration of thanksgiving and said ((to his companions): "You have killed the worst of the men." (۲

Worship out of Love (۲

Sadi recounts: "During one of my travels to Mecca, I found myself in the company of a group of pure-hearted and sincere youths, who used to chant supplications and recite poems befitting men of letters and engage themselves in acts of worship with an .extraordinary presence of heart

On the

Tadhkeratul Haqa`iq, pg. ۲۸ -۱

Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۹, pg. ۷۷; 'Ali Wa Farzandan (Dr. Taha Husain), pg. ۱۲۳ -۲

way we were joined by a 'dry' and 'soulless' worshipper, who did not approve of this mystical state of theirs and, being unaware of the inner fervour of the devoted .youths, persistently criticized their behaviour

We continued on our way till we reached a place known as Bani Hilal where, a black-faced Arab child approached us and began chanting for us in such a manner so melodious that even enraptured the birds and caused them to descend from their .flight

The enchanting melody instilled such fervour in the worshipper's camel that it flung .the worshipper to the ground and frantically rushed out into the desert

Turning to the worshipper, I said: "O' Old worshipper! You observe how a pleasant melody tends to affect even the animals whereas you are apathetic and indifferent (remaining unaffected by the spiritual melodies, not submitting your heart to Allah and (not acquiring purity, unlike the pious and the pure-hearted ones)."" (١)

The Long Worshipper (٣

Owais Qarani was of those individuals, who had become completely enraptured with worship such that, at times, he would pass the entire night in the state of ruku while at other times he would say: "Tonight is the night for prostration," and would remain in .prostration till dawn

He was told: "What is this inconvenience that you impose upon yourself?" He replied: "O' how I wish that the entire eternity were one night, which I could pass in one ".prostration

Rabi' Ibn Khathim (buried in Mashhad and popularly known as Khwajah Rabi') relates: "I was in Kufah and my prime objective

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Hikayat-ha-e-Gulistan, pg. ١٢٨ -١

was to meet Owais Qarani. When I eventually found him, he was engaged in his afternoon prayers near the river Euphrates. I said to myself: "I shall wait till he ".completes his prayers

Completing his afternoon prayers, he began reciting supplications and continued to do so till it became time for the Maghreb and Isha prayers. Having offered them, he engaged himself in offering the recommended prayers - at times in ruku' while at .other times in sajdah, and this continued till the night reached its termination

He offered his morning prayers and once again engaged himself in reciting supplications till the sun rose above the horizon whereupon he permitted himself some rest. Waking up, he performed his ablution and was about to start his worship when I approached him and said: "How greatly you trouble yourself!" He said: "It is for achieving comfort that I endure such effort." I said to him: "I did not see you eat anything. How do you manage to arrange for your expenses?" He said: "Allah has taken upon Himself to provide sustenance to His servants. Now do not indulge in any (more of such talks. Having spoken thus, he left."" (١

Iblis' Worship (۴

The Commander of the Faithfuls (a.s) said: "Take lesson from Allah's action with respect to Iblis, for He annulled all his acts of worship (because of his arrogance); he had worshipped Allah for six thousand years, and you know not if they were of the years of the world or those of the hereafter (every day

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Paighambar Wa Yaran, vol. ١, pg. ٣۵٠; Nasikh al-Tawarikh – 'Ali (as) , pg. ١٧۶ -١

of which is equivalent to fifty thousand years of this world). And this was a consequence of a moment's disobedience (in that he considered himself to be superior to Adam and refused to prostrate before him). So, after the Satan, is there anyone who can remain safe from Allah's punishment by being disobedient to Him?"(۱)

Imam Sadiq (a.s) was asked: "For what reason did Allah respite Iblis till the 'appointed time'?"

The Imam (a.s) replied: "Because of his praise and thanksgiving to Allah."

He (a.s) was asked again: "What was his praise and thanksgiving?"

He (a.s) replied: "His six thousand years of worship in the heavens." (On another occasion he (a.s) said: "He offered, in the seven heavens, a two-rak'at prayer which extended for a period of six thousand years).")(۲)

Imam Sajjad (۵

The reason for Imam Sajjad (a.s) being given the title of Zainul 'abidin was that one night, as he stood for prayers in his place of worship, Satan manifested himself in the form of a huge serpent with the intention of distracting him (a.s) from his prayers. But when the Imam (a.s) took no notice of him, the Satan approached him (a.s) and bit his big toe causing pain to run through him, but despite this act of his, the Imam (a.s) continued to remain oblivious of him and carried on with his prayers.

When, after the completion of his (a.s) prayers, he realized that it was Satan, he cursed him saying: "O' Accursed! Go away," and once again engaged himself in worship. It was at

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۱- Nahj al-Balaghah, (Faidh al-Islam), pg. ۷۸۰, Sermon ۲۳۴

۲- Iblis Nameh, pg. ۱۶۵; 'Ilal al-Sharai', vol. ۲, pg. ۲۴۳

this moment that he (a.s) heard an angel call out three times: “You are the embellishment of the worshippers.”(1)

56. Covenants and Promises

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

أَوْفُوا بِعَهدِ اللهِ إِذاَ عَاهَدْتُمْ

“And fulfil the covenant of Allah when you have made a covenant.”(2)

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said:

لاَ دِينَ لِمَنْ لاَ عَهِدَ لَهُ.

“One, who does not adhere to his covenants (and promises), has no religion.”(3)

Short Explanation

In the Noble Qur`an, Allah has made many promises and has ordered that covenants and promises should be fulfilled.

One who enters into a covenant must adhere to it and not violate it irrespective of whether the covenant is with Allah and the Prophet, or with the creations of Allah. Non-adherence to one's covenant and promise shall cause one to become ostracized, its burden shall remain upon his neck like a necklace till the Day of Judgment and Allah shall cause the person's enemies to gain ascendancy over him.

Even if the opposite party happens to be a disbeliever or an immoral person, one must not break one's covenant with him and cause his life to fall into disarray.

1) The Noble Prophet and Abu Haitham

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) had promised one of his companions, Abu Haitham Ibn Tayyahan, that he (s.a.w) would present him with a slave. Incidentally it so happened that three captives were brought before him - two of whom he (s.a.w) gifted away

.while one remained with him

Meanwhile Hadhrat Zahra (s.a) approached him (s.a.w) and requested: “O' Prophet of Allah! Can you grant me a slave or an assistant? Do you not see the effects

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Muntahal A’mal, vol. ۲, pg. ۳ -۱

Suratul Nahl (۱۶), Verse ۹۱ -۲

Shaytan, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۹۴ -۳

"?of the hand-mill upon my hands

At that moment the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) suddenly recollected his promise to Abu Haitham and said to himself: "Since I had previously promised Abu Haitham, how can I grant my daughter precedence over him, even though my daughter turns the hand-mill with her weak and delicate hands?"(١)

The Conquered King of the Sasanid Dynasty (٢

The Sasanid period saw the rule of seven kings with Khusroe being regarded as the greatest of them and referred to as Malik al-Muluk (the king of kings). One of the seven kings was Harmazan, who ruled in Ahwaz. When the Muslims conquered Ahwaz, Harmazan was taken captive and brought before Umar, who said to him: "If ".you truly desire to remain safe, accept Islam or else I shall surely kill you

Harmazan said: "Now that you shall eventually kill me, order for some water to be ".given to me for I am intensely thirsty

Upon Umar's order some water was brought for him in a wooden bowl, but Harmazan said: "I shall not drink from this bowl for I am used to drinking water in bowls studded ".with jewels

At this point the Commander of the Faithfuls (a.s) said: "This is not an extravagant ".request. Bring for him a crystalline bowl

Water was poured into a crystalline bowl and presented to him but, instead of .drinking it, he kept holding the bowl in his hands

Umar said: "I have taken a covenant with Allah that I shall not kill you till you have ".drunk the water

Having heard this, Harmazan smashed the bowl on

Shanidaniha-e-Tarikh, pg. ۲۹۰; Mahajjah al-Baidha, vol. ۵, pg. ۳۳۸ -۱

.the ground and spilled all the water in the process

Umar stood aghast over this deception and, turning to the Commander of the "?Faithfuls (a.s), asked: "What should be done now

He (a.s) replied: "Since you had made his death contingent to his drinking the water and had entered into a covenant (with Allah) in this regard you cannot put him to ".death now; impose upon him the jizyah (tribute), instead

Harmazan said: "I refuse to pay the tribute; however, now with serenity of mind and ".without any fear, I shall turn into a Muslim

Saying this, he testified to the Unity of Allah and the Prophethood of the Noble .Prophet (s.a.w) and became a Muslim

Umar was delighted and seating Harmazan beside himself, he granted him a house in Madinah and allotted for him an annual sum of ten thousand dinars (from the public (treasury).(١)

The Oath of Fudhul (٣

Twenty years before the Noble Prophet's (s.a.w) proclamation of Prophethood and at a time when he (s.a.w) was exactly twenty years of age, an incident transpired as follows: One day, a person from the tribe of Bani Zubaid sold some goods to 'as Ibn Wail. 'as took possession of the goods but refused to pay him the money for it. In desperation, the man climbed atop the mountain of Abu Qubais and shouted: "O' People! Rush to the help of an oppressed one, who happens to be far from his tribe and relatives. Surely, reverence befits one, who possesses integrity, whereas there is ".no esteem for a cheat

The people, who

Pand-e-Tarikh, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۲; Al-Kalam Yajurru al-Kalam -١

were around the Kabah, were inspired and motivated by this speech and so a group, consisting of some individuals from various tribes, gathered in the house of 'Abdullah Ibn Juda'an and made a pact amongst themselves to provide assistance to the oppressed ones and prevent anyone from being oppressed in Mecca. The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) too was a party to this agreement. Later, all of them set out and handed the person his money.

Years later, after the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) had proclaimed his Prophethood, he (s.a.w) said: “In the house of 'Abdullah Ibn Juda'an I had participated in a covenant such that had I been invited to the like of it in Islam, I would have surely accepted.” (۱)

۴) Standing up for Islam until the End

Anas Ibn Nadhr was the uncle of Anas Ibn Malik - the slave of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w). As he had not participated in the battle of Badr, he said to the Noble Prophet (s.a.w): “O' Prophet of Allah! I could not participate in the battle that had loomed up before you nonetheless, I promise that should there ensue another battle, I shall surely participate in it.”

When the battle of Uhud came to pass, he presented himself and fought in it. In the course of the battle when rumours were making round amongst the Muslim forces that the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) had been killed, some said: “O' How we wish we had a representative, whom we could send to 'Abdullah Ibn Ubayy, (the leader of the hypocrites), so that he could procure a

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۱- Dastan-ha-e-Zindagi-e-Payambar, pg, ۳۶; Tabaqat al-Kubra, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۲۸

".pardon for us from Abu Sufiyan

Some sat at a distance, hand upon hand, and worried and anxious, wondering about .what would happen in the future

Some others said: "Now that Muhammad has been killed, revert back to your original ".faith

Hearing these words, Anas Ibn Nadhr announced: "I absolve myself from what these people recommend." He then asserted: "If Muhammad has been killed, the Allah of Muhammad is still alive. What is the purpose of life now that Noble Prophet has died? "!Continue fighting for the very purpose that the Noble Prophet fought

Then, unsheathing his sword and in accordance with his covenant, he battled with the enemies till he tasted martyrdom, suffering around eighty injuries of arrows and lances. His wounds were so numerous that when his sister Rabi' arrived, she managed to identify him only by means of his fingertips.(١)

The Muslim Slave (۵

Fudhail Ibn Zaid Raqqashi, one of the Muslim officials, along with his soldiers laid siege to a fort, by the name of Shahriyaj, with the objective of conquering it. After some .hours of battle, he returned to his camp for some rest

In those days, slaves who came into the captivity of the Muslims, were put up for sale in the market. If they happened to be Muslims, they would battle against the enemies .alongside their Muslim brethren

In Fudhail's army too there was a slave soldier, who happened to lag behind the main contingent. Observing him to be alone, the enemy forces spoke to him in the local dialect from atop the fort

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Paighambar Wa Yaran, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۳۴ -۱

and sought pardon and safety from him; the soldier acceded to their demand and granted them the letter of pardon.

When the forces of Islam advanced upon the fort, the enemy forces opened its door before them leaving the Muslim soldiers bewildered. The enemy forces carried the letter of pardon of the slave soldier and presented it to the Muslim army. Acknowledging a pardon granted by a slave soldier was very unusual in those days and so, the issue was referred to the second Caliph, who wrote back stating: "The Muslim slave is also from the Muslims and his covenants deserve the same respect as yours. Honour his letter of pardon and ensure that it is implemented."(١)

٥٧. Justice

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

إِعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقرَبُ لِلتَّقوَى

"Act equitably, that is nearer to piety."(٢)

Imam 'Ali (a.s) has said:

أَلعَدلُ يَضَعُ الأُمُورَ مَوَاضِعَهَا.

"By means of justice, every issue is placed in its appropriate position."(٣)

Short Explanation

Justice means to act with equality and fairness to the maximum extent possible for a person. Fulfilment of mutual rights, payment of that which is due to a person - whatever be its measure, fairness and even-handedness with respect to the partners ... are all examples of justice. A person's esteem is reliant upon his justice and fairness. If a king is just, his subjects shall be the beneficiaries of divine grace and blessings.

Allah sent the Prophets with manifest proofs in order to establish justice within the

.society and to prevent it from being led towards decadence

Dependence of people with respect to

Dastan-ha-e-Ma, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۱۱; Kudak-e-Falsafi, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۷ -۱

Suratul Ma`idah (۵), Verse ۸ -۲

Shaytan, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۶۶ -۳

one another necessitates that moderateness and fairness is taken into regard with .respect to discipline, morals, covenants and even children

Deviating from moderation and going towards the extremes weaken the foundations .of justice and serve to inflame discords amongst the people

Shadeed's Governance (۱

After the death of 'ad, his two sons – Shaddad and Shadeed became kings. But since the latter died earlier, Shaddad became the absolute monarch during the time of .(Hadhrat Hud (a.s

Although a polytheist, Shadeed exhibited justice to such an extent that it became well-known that during his reign neither would a wolf attack a sheep nor would an .eagle attack a pigeon

With the objective of resolving the disputes of his subjects, Shadeed nominated a judge in his kingdom and provided him with a monthly allowance. However, despite sitting in the court for a period of one year, no one came with a dispute for him to !!resolve

Therefore he said to Shadeed: "It is unbecoming for me to take my monthly allowance for I have not resolved any dispute!" However Shadeed ordered: "You must take your ".allowance and continue to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted unto you

After a period two persons approached the judge and one of them said to him: "I had purchased a piece of land from this person and have stumbled across a treasure in it. ".Despite my repeated requests, this seller is unwilling to accept it

On his part, the seller said: "(I cannot do so for) I had sold the land to the purchaser together with everything that

".existed within it

Conducting his investigations, the judge came to realize that the seller had a son while the purchaser had a daughter and so he ruled: "The purchaser's daughter should be married to the seller's son and the treasure should be given to them, and in this manner, put an end to their dispute."(۱)

Impartiality Between Children (۲

Once, a lady entered the house of Aishah, the wife of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), with her two children. 'aishah presented three dates to the lady, who gave one date to each of her two children and taking the third date she halved it and once again .distributed it evenly amongst them

When the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) returned, 'aishah narrated the episode to him whereupon he (s.a.w) said: "Did the lady's act leave you astonished? Due to her ".fairness and even-handedness, Allah shall place her in Paradise

It has also been reported that once, a father arrived in the presence of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) accompanied by his two children. In his (s.a.w) presence he kissed one child and ignored the other. Noticing this incorrect act the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) commented: "Why do you not treat your children equally?"(۲)

The Red Apparel (۳

Once, a pious and abstemious person came to Mansur Dawaniqi, the second Abbasid Caliph, and began preaching and advising him. In the course of his dialogue, he said: "In the course of my travels I had gone to China, which was ruled by a just ruler. One .day he was afflicted by sickness which weakened his faculty of hearing

He called his

Rahnama-e-Sa'adat, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۵۱; Raudhah al-Safa, vol. ۱, pg. ۷۹۱ -۱

Riwayat-ha Wa Hikayat-ha, pg. ۷۳; al-Hadith, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۶۷ -۲

ministers and said: “I have fallen sick and have lost my hearing, and then began weeping profusely.”

They consoled him saying: “Although your hearing has weakened, Allah shall grant you a long life due to your justice and equity.”

The king said: “You are in error and you reflect on something which is away from reality. I do not weep for my hearing, for a learned one knows that all the limbs and organs shall eventually perish. I weep because if an oppressed one were to seek justice and clamour for help, I would not hear him and thus would not be able to strive towards providing him with justice.”

He then issued instructions that it should be announced in all cities that whoever happens to suffer oppression should wear a red apparel so that the king's soldiers recognize him from afar and endeavour to provide justice to him.”(۱)

۴) Equality in the Spoils of War

When the battle of Hunain concluded and the spoils of war were about to be distributed, some of the Bedouins, who had participated in the war approached the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) and said: “O' Prophet of Allah! Grant us a share too.”

They created such a commotion that he (s.a.w) had to retreat towards a tree and in the tumult, his cloak was pulled off his shoulders. He (s.a.w) said: “Hand me back my cloak. By the Allah, in whose power lies my soul! Had there been camels, cows and sheep equivalent to the number of trees on the face of the earth, I would have

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۱- Jawame’ al-Hikayat, pg. ۷۳

".surely distributed them amongst you

As he said this, he (s.a.w) plucked out a hair from the hump of a camel and said: "By Allah! From the spoils of war, I shall not take anything more than the khums, even in the measure of this hair, and that too, I shall gift to you. You too, with respect to the spoils of war, should not be unfaithful - not even in the measure of a needle or a yarn, ".for theft with regards to it only merits ignominy and the fire of Hell

A person from amongst the Ansar (The Helpers) stood up, brought out a woven yarn "!and said: "I had taken this to weave a saddle for my camel

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said: "I gift to you my share that exists in this yarn." Hearing this, the man said: "If the accounting and distribution has to be so accurate and severe, then I do not need this yarn." Saying this, he dropped the yarn onto the (ground.(۱

!The Name of 'Ali is Synonymous with Justice (۵

On one of the occasions when Muawiyah had gone for Hajj, he made inquires about a woman, by the name of Darmiyah Hajuniyah, who was well-known for her long standing support for 'Ali (a.s) and her enmity towards Muawiyah. Having been informed that she was alive, he ordered her to be brought before him. When she had arrived, he asked her: "Do you have any idea as to why I have summoned you before me? I have brought you here to know why you

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Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۰; Nasikh al-Tawarikh (Hadhrat Rasool), vol. ۳, -۱ pg. ۱۵۰

".love 'Ali (a.s) and harbour animosity towards me

".The woman said: "It is better if you refrain from such talks

".Muawiyah insisted: "You must answer me

She said: "or the simple reason that 'Ali (a.s) was a just person and supported equality whereas you needlessly fought him. I approve of 'Ali (a.s) because he loved the poor whereas I detest you because you shed unwarranted blood, spread dissensions and discords amongst the Muslims, adjudicate oppressively and unfairly, and act in "!!accordance to your carnal desires

Muawiyah was infuriated and an impolite dialogue ensued between the two, but eventually Muawiyah stifled his anger and as per his habit, exhibiting gentleness, he asked: "Did you see 'Ali (a.s) with your own eyes?" She replied: "Yes." He then asked: "How?" She said: "By Allah! I had seen him in a state such that this kingdom and sultanate, which has deceived you and made you heedless had neither deceived him ".nor made him heedless

Muawiyah said: "Have you heard his voice?" She replied: "Yes. A voice that would ".burnish the heart and clear the turbidity from it just as olive oil clears away the rust

Muawiyah said: "Do you desire anything?" She said: "Shall you give me whatever I ask for?" When he had replied in the affirmative, she said: "Give me one hundred red-".haired camels

Muawiyah said: "If I give them to you, would you look upon me as you look upon 'Ali ".(a.s)?" Defiantly, she said: "Never

However, Muawiyah ordered one hundred red-haired camels to be given to her and

then commented: "Had 'Ali (a.s) been alive, he would not have given you even one of these."

Hearing this, the woman retorted: "By Allah! He would not have given me even one single hair of these camels, for he considered them to be the property of all the Muslims."(١)

٥٨. Chastisement

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ

"Most surely the punishment of your Lord will come to pass."(٢)

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said:

لَا يُعَذِّبُ اللهُ قَلباً وُعِىَ بِالْقُرآنِ.

"Allah shall not chastise the heart in which is contained the Noble Qur`an."(٣)

Short Explanation

In order to prevent the people from committing crimes and offences an excess of which would result in the disintegration and destruction of the society, Allah ordered all the Prophets to warn their people: "Chastisement awaits you."

The kind of chastisement depends upon the kind of offence and the type of vice. The Arabs would be punished because of fanaticism, the rulers due to oppression, scholars because of envy, the traders due to unfaithfulness and the villagers as a result of ignorance.

Since the levels of hell vary, consequently the intensity and severity of the chastisement also vary. Some shall remain eternally within it while others, as a result of intercession or upon completion of their term, shall attain deliverance and then go

on to enter Paradise. The worst of the chastisements is that a person suffers from hard-heartedness in the world and finds himself in the lowest rank of hell in the hereafter.

The Chastisement of the People of ‘Ad (1)

When Prophet Hud (a.s) was forty years of his age, Allah revealed

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1- Dastan-ha-e-Ustad, vol. ۲, pg. ۹۷; Bist Guftar, pg. ۶۷

2- Suratul Tur (۵۲), Verse ۷

3- Shaytan, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۱۵

to him: “Go to your nation and invite your people towards monotheism and My ".worship

The nation of Prophet Hud (a.s) was 'ad, which consisted of thirteen tribes. The people possessed a tall physique and a long life-span. They engaged themselves in farming and possessed excellent date palms, and their cities were the most prosperous of the .Arab cities

For years on end Prophet Hud (a.s) strived to guide his nation, but when it yielded no result, he said to them: “I shall curse you.” His people said: “O' Hud! The people of Nuh possessed a frail and weak physique but our Allahs are strong and so are our bodies. ".We do not fear the punishment

Allah sent down upon them a devastating wind (about which the Commander of the (".Faithfuls(a.s) said: “I seek refuge in Allah from the devastating wind

When the chastisement came upon them it plucked their castles, forts, cities and all the other structures, tossed them into the air as if pebbles and then grounded them into fine powder. For seven nights and eight days it blew over them - picking up the .men and the women, and annihilating them

The people of Propet Hud were referred to as dhat al-I'mad (the possessors of pillars) for they would carve out gigantic pillars from the mountains and then construct their palaces atop these pillars. In the wake of the chastisement, all of them were ground into dust. According to the Noble Qur`an(۱), their chastisement was رِيحاً صَرصَـرِاً - a furiously raging cold

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Suratul Qamar (۵۴), Verse ۱۹ -۱

wind, which plucked them up from the ground, tossed them into the air like a locust (and then dashed them against the mountains till their bones crumbled into powder. (۱)

Ibn Muljam and the Chastisement in the Purgatory (۲

Ibn Raqa narrates: "I was near Masjid al-Haram in Mecca when I noticed that a group of people had gathered near the Station of Ibrahim (a.s) whereupon I inquired: "What is the matter?" I was told: "A Christian monk has accepted Islam." I pushed myself into the crowd and witnessed a tall old man, dressed in woolen clothes and wearing a woolen cap, seated opposite the Station of Ibrahim and delivering a speech.

I heard him say: "One day I was seated in the monastery and was looking out of it when, as a result of mystical intuition, I suddenly witnessed a gigantic bird resembling a hunting-hawk descend upon a slab of stone near the sea and vomit out something. I observed that one-fourth of a human body had come out of its mouth.

The bird then flew off and disappeared from view. A little later it returned and vomiting out something, it once again flew out of sight. I saw that once again one-fourth of a human body had come out of its mouth. It returned for the third time and threw out another fourth of a human body and yet again for the fourth time till an entire human figure was formed.

After some time it returned and striking its beak, took away one fourth of the body. It repeated this act

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Hayat al-Qulub, vol. ۱, pg. ۹۹ -۱

.three more times till it had taken away the person completely

I was stunned and exclaimed: "O' Allah! Who is this person, who is being subjected to this chastisement? I was greatly upset with myself as to why I did not go and question him but it was not long before the hunting bird returned and vomited out one fourth of the human body and repeated the act three more times till the entire human body .was formed again

I hastened towards the person and enquired: "Who are you and what have you "?done

He replied: "I am Ibn Muljam and I am the person who has killed 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s). ".Allah has commanded this bird to kill, eat and chastise me in this manner every day

I asked him: "Who is 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s)?" He replied: "The cousin of the Prophet of ".(Islam (s.a.w

Thus, it was this strange incident (and the mystical intuition of the purgatory) that (prompted me to become a Muslim."" (۱

The Recompense of Deeds (۳

When the forces of Chenghiz, the Mongol, had barbarically attacked Iran, there was a bloodbath everywhere. Every city that he would enter, Chenghiz would question the people: "Who kills you - Allah or I?" If they answered: "You kill us," he would kill them .all, and if they answered: "Allah kills us," he would still kill them all

Once, upon entering the city of Hamadan, he sent some persons to the elders of the city asking them to present themselves before him for he desired to speak to

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Alam-e-Barzakh, pg. ۱۷۸; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۴۲, pg. ۳۰۷' -۱

.them

All were perplexed as to what could be done, when a brave and intelligent youth said: “I shall go to him.” The others said: “We fear for your life.” He replied: “I too am like the ”.others, and prepared to go

Taking along with him a camel, a rooster and a goat, he approached Chenghiz's camp and, presenting himself before him, said: “If you want someone big, here is a camel; if you are looking for a long-bearded one, then here is a goat for you; and if you desire someone talkative, there is a rooster for you here - however if you need to converse ”.with someone, I stand here before you

”?Chenghiz said: “Tell me, who shall kill these people, Allah or I

”.The youth said: “It is neither Allah, Who shall kill them, nor you

”.Hearing this, Chengiz asked: “Then who is it that shall kill them

(The youth replied: “The retribution of their deeds.”(١

The Cause for the Descent of Chastisement (۴

The first person to devise a balance for measurement for the people was Prophet Shuaib (a.s). However, as time passed by, his people began to indulge in weighing less than the weights - this sin being an addition to their other sins of not believing Allah .and rejecting the Prophets

When weighing for themselves they would weigh correctly, but when they would sell .their products, they would sell less than the weights and indulge in fraud

They were leading a life of ease, comfort and Abundance till their king ordered them to hoard goods and commit cheating in weights. Prophet

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Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۶, pg. ۱۰۵ -۱

Shuaib (a.s) advised the king and the people to refrain from these evils but to no avail; on the contrary, upon the king's orders, Prophet Shuaib (a.s) and his followers were thrown out of the city. When this took place, Divine chastisement descended upon them.(۱)

A wave of intense heat overtook them - so severe that neither shade nor water could provide any relief. Subsequent to this intense heat wave, a cloud appeared over their heads and a cool breeze began to blow prompting all the people to gather under the cloud to escape from the severe heat. When all the people had gathered under it, sparks of fire began to rain down upon from it while simultaneously the ground beneath them began to shake vigourously leaving all of them crumpled and burnt. The duration of this sequence of chastisement has been reported to be nine days and consisted of a scorching wind, hot water and a severe earthquake.(۲)

۵) Chastisement of those who Conceal the Truth

Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah Ansari relates: "Imam 'Ali (a.s) had been delivering a sermon for us and after he had praised and glorified Allah, (a.s) said: 'In the forefront of this gathering, there are some companions of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w): Anas Ibn Malik, Barra Ibn 'azib Ansari, Ash'ath Ibn Qais and Khalid Ibn Yazid Bajalli.'

Then turning towards them, he first said to Anas Ibn Malik: "O' Anas! If you had heard the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) say about me:

مَن كُنتُ مَولاَهُ فَهَذاَ عَلِيٌّ مَولاَهُ

"Of whomsoever I am the master, this 'Ali is his master

۱- In Suratul A'raf, it has been referred to as الرَّجْفَه meaning 'earthquake', while in Suratul Shua'ra, it has been referred to as 'day of overshadowing gloom'.

۲- Tarikh-e-Anbiya, vol. ۲, pg. ۳۴

too" and refuse to testify to my leadership today, Allah shall afflict you with leprosy such that white spots shall become manifest upon your head and face and even your ".turban would fail to conceal them

Then addressing Ash'ath, he said: "As for you, O' Ash'ath! If you had heard the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) say it about me and refrain from bearing witness to it, you shall .become blind in both eyes towards the end of your life

And you, O' Khalid Ibn Yazid! If you had heard it about me and now conceal it and .refrain from testifying in my favour, Allah shall afflict you with a Pagan death

And you, O' Barra Ibn 'azib, if you have heard the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) say this and refuse to bear witness for my wilayah, you shall die in the same place from which you ".(had migrated (towards Madinah

Of course, all four of them had been present on the day of Ghadir-e-Khum and had heard this well-known sentence from the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), but later concealed it !and denied the event

Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah Ansari states: "By Allah! After a period, I witnessed Anas Ibn Malik such that he had been afflicted with leprosy to the extent that he could not conceal the white spots of the disease which had erupted on his face and head, even by .means of his turban

I saw Asha'th such that he had become blind in both eyes and used to say: "Thank Allah that 'Ali (a.s) cursed me about

being blinded in my eyes in this world and did not curse me with chastisement in the hereafter for had he done so, I would have suffered eternal chastisement in the hereafter.

I witnessed Khalid Ibn Yazid, who died in his house; his family members desired to bury him in the house but the tribe of Kindah came to know of their intention and attacked them and buried him, according to the Pagan rites, near the door of the house and he died a death of the pre-Islamic era.

As for Barra, Muawiyah appointed him the ruler of Yemen and he died there itself, the very place from where he had previously migrated to Madinah.'"(١)

٥٩. Forgiveness

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ أَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقرَبُ لِلتّقوَى

"And it is nearer to righteousness that you should relinquish."(٢)

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said:

أَلعَفوُ لَا يَزِيدُ الْعَبدَ إلّاَ عِزّاً.

"Forgiveness increases a person in esteem."(٣)

Short Explanation

Forgiving, despite possessing the strength (to retaliate) is of the conduct of the Prophets; pardon is when a person commits an offence or sin with respect to another, who in return not only forgives him, from within his heart, but also manifests his beneficence and kindness, externally.

How can one, who does not forgive others, expect to be forgiven by the Almighty Lord?

Allah cloaks every servant of his with forgiveness in this world and in the hereafter, and hence it becomes imperative for them to forgive and pardon one another. And if it so happens that someone - intentionally or unintentionally - does commit a malevolent

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Hikayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۰۲; Minhaj al-Bara'h, vol. ۱۲, pg. ۲۱۶ -۱

Suratul Baqarah (۲), Verse ۲۳۷ -۲

Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۶۸ -۳

deed, one should magnanimously and graciously disregard it in order that Allah too, (by His favour, disregards one's own malevolence.(١)

Beating The Servant (١

Once, a companion of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) began hitting his slave. The slave kept pleading: "By Allah! Do not beat me. For Allah's sake forgive me." The master, however, refused to pardon him and continued to shower beatings upon him.

Some people informed the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) of the slave's predicament whereupon he (s.a.w) got up and started out towards the scene of this incident. As soon as the companion's eyes fell upon the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) he stopped his beatings whereupon the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said to him: "He placed you under the oath of Allah, but you refused to pardon him and now that you have set your eyes upon me, you have restrained yourself?"

The man, in order to make amends for his deplorable behaviour, said: "I now free him for the sake (and pleasure) of Allah!"

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said: "Had you not freed him, you would have dropped face-down into the fire of Hell."(٢)

Pardon for the Killer (٢

During the period of the leadership of the late Ayatullah al-Udhma Sayyid Abu Al-Hasan Isfahani, one night, as he led the congregation for the Maghreb prayers in Najaf-e-Ashraf, a person with a knife stabbed his son - an extremely admirable and exemplary person - to death.

When Sayyid Abu al-Hasan Isfahani was informed of his son's martyrdom, exhibiting great patience and forbearance he said: "There is no power or strength save with Allah" and then,

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١- Tadhkeratul Haqa`iq, pg. ۵۶

Shanidani-ha-e-Tarikh, pg. ۹۸; Mahajjah al-Baidha, vol. ۳, pg. ۴۴۵ -۲

.standing up, he led the 'Isha prayers

Later, when the people approached him and sought to know of the action he desired to initiate against his son's murderer, he simply said: “I have forgiven him.”(1)

Freedom of the Slave–Girl (3

One day, some people had come to the house of Imam Sajjad (a.s) as guests. Preparing the meals, one of Imam's (a.s) servants hastily pulled out the kebabs from the oven; as he did so, the skewers of the kebabs slipped from his grasp, fell upon the head of Imam Sajjad's (a.s) child, who had been standing below the ladder, and caused his death. The servant stood aghast and terribly perturbed, but the Imam (a.s) said: “You have not done it on purpose. Go away, for I have freed you in the way of Allah.” He then ordered that the child be given ablution, shrouded and buried.(2)

Sufiyan Thauri relates: “One day, arriving in the presence of Imam Sadiq (a.s) I found him to be disturbed and unsettled. I sought to know the reason for it whereupon he (a.s) said: “I had prohibited everyone from climbing atop the roof of the house, however when I entered the house, I observed one of the slave-girls, who had been entrusted the responsibility of educating one of my children, standing atop the ladder with my infant in her arms. But as soon as she saw me, she was left dumbfounded and began to tremble as a result of which my son dropped out of her hands onto the ground and died.

1- Sima-e-Farzanegan, pg. ۳۳۶; Ganjina-e-Danishmandan, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۲۱

2- Muntahal A’mal, vol. ۲, pg. ۴. It has been mentioned in Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۱۱ that Imam Sajjad (as) would summon all his slaves and slave-girls before him on the day of Eid al-Fitr, forgive their misdids, grant them gifts, fri some of them after which he would say to them: “Say to Allah: Forgive ‘Ali Ibn Al-Husain (as) just as he has forgiven us!”

I am disturbed and uneasy over the fear that overtook the slave-girl because of me. Nevertheless, I told her: "There is no sin upon you and I have set you free for the (pleasure of Allah."" (١)

The Son's Pardon for the Killer (۴

When the caliphate fell into the hands of the Abbasids, the Ummayad elders took to flight and concealed themselves - one of them being Ibrahim Ibn Sulaiman Ibn 'Abdul Malik, an old but wise and erudite person, who was eventually pardoned and granted .protection by Abu al-Abbas Saffah - the first Abbasid Caliph

One day Saffah said to him: "I would like to know what transpired with you during your ".period of concealment

Ibrahim said: "I had concealed myself in Herah, in a place close to the desert. One day, from the roof-top I witnessed black flags advancing from the direction of Kufah. I assumed that they were coming for me and so fled from my hideaway and arrived in .Kufah

There, perplexed and distressed, I wandered through the streets till I reached a large house. As I stood there I witnessed a person, seated on his horse and accompanied by a few servants, enter the house. The servants asked me: 'What is it that you desire?' I said: 'I am a person, who is fearful and alarmed, and have come to you for shelter.' They took me into the house, accommodated me in one of the rooms and entertained me in the most excellent of manners. Neither did they question me about myself nor did I ask

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Ibid., pg. ١٢٨ -١

them about the owner of the house, however, I observed that everyday the owner of the house would go out in the company of his slaves and return home after a period and so, one day, I inquired: 'Are you in search of someone that you go out everyday?'"

He said: "We are on the lookout for Ibrahim Ibn Sulaiman, who has killed my father, so that I can extract revenge for my father's murder." I realized that he spoke the truth for I had indeed killed his father. I said to him: "Since you have accommodated and entertained me, I shall guide you to your father's killer." With great urgency and impatience he asked: "Where is he?"

I said: "I am Ibrahim Ibn Sulaiman!"

Hearing this, he said: "You lie!"

I said: "By Allah! No, I do not. I killed your father on such and such day!"

Realizing that I spoke the truth his complexion changed and his eyes began to spew blood. He lowered his head towards the ground and then raising it after some time, said: "Since I had granted you shelter I shall not kill you, however, in the presence of the just Allah, I shall surely seek revenge for my father's murder. Hasten away from here for I fear lest you may suffer harm from me."

He offered me a thousand dinars but I declined and departed from there. O' Caliph! I declare with complete candidness that excepting you, I have not witnessed a person more beneficent than him.(۱)

۵) The Conquest of Mecca

When the Noble

۱- Pand-e-Tarikh, vol. ۲, pg. ۹۲; Thamarah al-Auraq Ibn Hijjah

Prophet (s.a.w) conquered Mecca, he announced a general amnesty for all the people - except a few individuals, who were to be killed whenever found; amongst these were 'Abdullah Ibn Zab'ari, who used to satirize him (s.a.w), Wahshi, who had killed his uncle Hamzah in the battle of Uhud(١), 'Ikramah Ibn Abi Jahl, Safwan Ibn Umayyah and Habbar Ibn al-Aswad - all of whom he eventually pardoned after they were .(brought before him (s.a.w

As for Habbar Ibn al-Aswad, he was the person who frightened Zainab - the Noble Prophet's (s.a.w) daughter, who had been sent towards Madinah by her husband, Abu al-Abbas Ibn Rabi' - on the way to Madinah as a result of which she suffered a miscarriage. Subsequent to this act of his, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) had declared it .permissible to shed his blood

After the conquest of Mecca he approached the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), expressed regret over his misdeed and, seeking forgiveness, said: "O' Prophet of Allah! We were of the polytheists, however Allah, by means of you, guided us aright and delivered us from perdition, so disregard my ignorance and that which you have heard about me, "!and pardon me

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said: "I pardon you. Allah has exhibited kindness towards you in that He has guided you into Islam; with the acceptance of Islam, bygones (become bygones."(٢

Intellect .۶٠

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ مَا عِنْدَ اللهِ خَيْرٌ وَ أَبْقى أَ فَلَا تَعقِلُونَ

"And whatever is with Allah is better and more lasting; do you not

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When Wahshi recounted the episode of the killing of his (saw) uncle, Hamzah, he - ١

(saw) wept profusely but then pardoned him and said: غَيِّب وَجهَکَ عَنِّی (Disappear from my sight).

۲- اَلاِسلاَمُ يَجُبُّ ماَ قَبلَهُ Shaytan, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱۲

(then understand."(1

:Imam Sadiq (a.s) said

لاَ بَلَغَ جَـمِيعُ الْعَابِدِينَ فِى فَضْلِ عِبَادَتِهِمْ ما بَلَغَ الْعَاقِلُ.

All the worshippers, despite the excellence of their worship, do not achieve what a"
(person with intellect achieves."(2

Short Explanation

O' Lord! What have you not granted those, to whom You have granted intellect, and
(what have you granted those, to whom You have not granted intellect!(3

The personality of a person is founded upon his intellect and one who does not seek
.the assistance of this faculty in his affairs shall suffer loss and harm

Intellect is one of the Divine soldiers, and an internal argument and proof. Intellect, irrespective of whether it is inherently possessed or empirically achieved, brings
.about progress and advancement of man

The Prophets used to guide the people by speaking to them in accordance with their intellectual capabilities, and on the Day of Judgment, Allah shall reckon the deeds of his servants according to the measure of their understanding and intellect. Blind-following brings about eternal damnation in the hereafter - as was the case with Bani
!Israel who, in a fit of fanaticism and foolishness, killed 70 Divine Prophets in one day

Slaughtering the Gourd (1

After Muawiyah had embarked upon his policy of opposition towards the Commander of the Faithfuls(a.s), he once resolved to test the measure of obedience of the people
.of Syria towards him and so consulted 'Amr 'as in this regard

Amr As said: "Command the people to slaughter the gourd before eating it just as they
slaughter a sheep. If they act in accordance with your order then

Suratul Qasas (٢٨), Verse ٦٠ -١

Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. ١, pg. ١١١ -٢

Khwajah 'Abdullah Ansari -٣

".they are your allies, but if not, then they are not yet fully obedient to you

Muawiyah ordered that henceforth the people should slaughter the gourds just as they slaughtered the ship; the people too, without the slightest of objections, acted in compliance and subsequently this innovation became a customary practice .throughout Syria

It was not long before the news of this innovation reached the ears of the people of Iraq prompting some of them to question the Commander of the Faithfuls(a.s) about it :whereupon the Imam (a.s) replied

اَلقَرعُ لَیسَ یُذَکّی فَکُلُوه

It is not required to slaughter a gourd in order to eat it. Be wary, lest the Satan takes" (away your intellect and satanic ideas leave you confused and lead you astray."(١

Mature In Intellect (٢

With the intention of suppressing a group of rebellious enemies existing around Mecca and Madinah, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) readied a rapid-strike commando unit for the purpose of advancing secretly upon the enemies in the darkness of the night and overcoming them and appointed a youth from the tribe of Hudhail as the commander of this unit(٢). A shallow-minded person remonstrated saying: "Why have you appointed a youth as our chief? We refuse to obey his orders. You ought to have ".(appointed an elderly person as the chief and commander (of the army

The Noble Prophet (s.a.w) said: "O' Shallow-minded person! Although he is a youth, nevertheless he possesses a strong heart and a sound intellect, whereas the elders that you talk about, although they possess white beards and apparently should

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Dastan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١, pg. ٩٢; al-Kafi, vol. ۶, pg. ٣٧٠ -١

Historical accounts have reported many such appointments on the part of the Holy -٢ Prophet (saw) - amongst them being the appointment of I'tab Ibn Asid, a ٢١ year old

youth, as the ruler of Mecca and the appointment of the youth Usama b. Zaid as the .commander of his army

.be given the leadership, however, their hearts are dark as pitch

On numerous occasions I have put this youth to test and found him to be mature in intellect. Elderly in age (but) lacking in intellect yields no benefit. Strive, to the maximum extent possible, to be elderly in intellect and religion, for leadership is (determined not by age but by intelligence, reflection and a pure luminous heart."(۱

The Consequence of Foolishness (۳

In the biography of Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf Thaqafi - the bloodthirsty Umayyad, it has been reported that his mother, Fari'ah, had initially been the wife of Harith Ibn Kaldah - a well-known doctor, who divorced her when she picked her teeth at an inopportune .time; it was later that she entered into the wedlock of Yusuf Ibn 'Aqil Thaqafi

Hajjaj, at the time of his birth, did not possess an excretory opening; left with no other .option, his parents were forced to create an opening in his rear

In addition to this, he would also not drink the milk from the breast of his mother and .this left the parents worried and wondering as to what should be done

One day, an evil person approached them and instructed them that in order to remedy this problem they should kill a black goat and make Hajjaj drink its blood. When the goat was killed and the blood put into his mouth, Hajjaj began sucking and licking it. The following day the person directed them to kill a goat and pour its blood into his mouth. On the third

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Dastan-ha-e-Mathnawi, vol. ۳, pg. ۶۴ -۱

day he ordered them to kill a black snake, pour its blood into his mouth and rub it upon his face as well whereupon from the fourth day onwards Hajjaj began feeding himself .with the milk of his mother

As a result of this ignorant act, he grew up into such a savage and bloodthirsty individual that he would say: “I derive maximum pleasure by shedding blood – ”.(especially the blood of the descendents of the Noble Prophet (s.a.w

He was appointed governor and the commander of the army by 'Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan and ruled for twenty years till he died in the year ۹۵ ah (during the rule of .Walid Ibn 'Abdul Malik) at the age of fifty four

In the course of this period he killed a hundred and twenty thousand people, and at the time of his death, his roofless prison contained fifty thousand male and thirty .thousand female prisoners – majority of them bare and unclothed

Amongst those killed by this cruel tyrant were Kumail Ibn Ziyad Nakha'i – the companion of ‘Ali (a.s), Qambar – the slave of ‘Ali (a.s), Yahya Ibn Umm al-Tawil – a companion of Imam Sajjad (a.s), Sa'id Ibn Jubair, who has been greatly praised and (commended by Imam Sajjad (a.s) and numerous other celebrated personalities.(۱

Imam ‘Ali and the Astrologer (۴

There are some who are heedless with respect to reflection, reasoning and tawakkul, and instead, turn to soothsayers and astrologers, who have cleverly started their business in order to swindle the people of their money.(۲) As an example, we

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Tatimmah al-Muntaha, pg. ۶۶ -۱

Of course, the issue of the auliya of Allah and those, who have strived towards -۲ spiritual purification, differ vastly from the others, for their words are light (nur) and if, at times, they were to say something to someone, it would surely occur and hence .such personalities should not be compared to the others

shall present an incident that transpired during the time of Imam ‘Ali (a.s).

The Commander of the Faithfuls(a.s) and his army had started out for the battle of Nahrawan against the Kharjites, and having reached the city of Madain, they pitched their tents. The next morning, as they were about to commence their journey, an astrologer approached them and said: “My astrological calculations reveal that it is not in your interest to advance in this hour. Commence your journey after three hours and you shall be victorious.”

Hearing this, the Imam (a.s) said: “Whoever upholds your words has rejected the Qur`an of Allah.”[1]

He (a.s) then asked: “Do you possess knowledge as to which family has taken over the reins of leadership in China?”

The astrologer replied: “I have no knowledge.”

The Imam (a.s) questioned: “What is that star, which when rises, stirs up lust within the camels?”

The astrologer confessed: “I have no idea.”

The Imam (a.s) asked: “The rise of which star stirs up passion within the cats?”

He said: “I do not know!”

He (a.s) asked: “Inform me of the thing that is concealed beneath the hoofs of my horse.”

When the astrologer had once again pleaded ignorance, the Imam (a.s) said to him: “Within the earth, below the feet of my horse, lies a jar filled with gold coins and beneath which a serpent lies asleep.”

When the place was dug up, the people witnessed that the scenario was exactly as it had been described by the Imam (a.s).

Observing this, the astrologer was totally bewildered; the Imam

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۱- Surat Luqman (۳۱), Verse ۳۴: إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَهِ وَ يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ وَ يَعلَمُ ماَ فِى الأَرحَامِ

a.s) took possession of his books, ordered them to be destroyed and then said to him:) "The next time you try to attract the people towards yourself by means of astrology, I (shall put you behind bars."(1)

The Insanity–Exhibiting Wise Person (5

Every thing is recognized by means of its attributes and effects; sagaciousness and .intelligence of a person become manifest by means of his words and deeds

Bahlool (d. 190 ah), despite the fact that his father was the uncle of Haroon al-Rashid, exhibited himself as a lunatic in order to abstain himself from accepting the post of .(judge and issuing the death sentence for the seventh Imam (a.s

One of the most evident examples of his ration and intellect was the incident of his .entry into the class of Abu Hanifah - one of the Sunnite leaders

Once, as he happened to pass by the class Abu Hanifah, he heard him say: "Ja'far Ibn .Muhammad (a.s) has said to his students three things, which I do not approve of

He (a.s) has said: "Satan shall be chastised in the fire of Hell." But how can he be ?punished by means of fire when he has himself been created out of fire

He (a.s) also says: "Allah cannot be seen", whereas every entity can be perceived by .means of vision

He (a.s) also says: "Man, in performing his actions, is free and has a choice", whereas, .in reality, Allah is the Creator and His servants have no discretion and freedom

Having heard this from Abu Hanifah, Bahlool picked up a clod of

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1- Jame' al-Nurain, pg. 15; Bihar al-Anwar

.earth and hit him on the head, injuring him and prompting lamentations from him

His students rushed towards Bahlool and seizing him, presented him before the .caliph

Abu Hanifah said to the caliph: “Bahlool has struck me with a clod of earth and injured ”.me

”.Bahlool retorted: “If he speaks the truth ask him to show the pain

Then turning to Abu Hanifah, he said: “Have you not been created from earth? How then can earth harm and injure you? (Besides) What wrong have I done? Are you yourself not of the opinion that it is Allah, who performs all the acts and deeds, and man has no discretion and freedom? Thus, you should register a complaint against ”.Allah and not against me

Abu Hanifah, having received the answers to his objections, withdrew his complaint (and went his way.”(١

Shagirdan-e-Maktab-e-Aimmah, pg. ٢۶٢; Qamus al-Rijal, vol. ٢, pg. ٢۵٢ -١

Part ۴

point

.Moral stories from the lives of the prophets, the Ahlul Bayt and their companions

Foreword

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

,Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) has said

بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الأَخْلاَقِ

".I have been sent to perfect the good morals"

The Islamic Education department of The World Federation has a proud tradition of producing literature in the field of Islamic Ethics, in its long history of service to the community. In continuation of this service, we are pleased to present part four of the Farsi work 'Yaksad Mawzu, wa Pansad Dastan' by Sayyid Ali Akbar Sadaqat. The .translation from Farsi to English was carried out by Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi

I would like to personally thank both Sayyid Ali Akbar Sadaqat and Shaykh Shahnawaz Mahdavi for their efforts in bringing this collection of very practical, inspirational and motivational stories into the hands of lay-people. The 'Anecdotes for Reflection' .series has proven to be very popular amongst all sectors of the community

Indeed some of my own Zakir colleagues make use of them for lectures, as do Madrasah teachers for their lessons to the younger generation. The far-reaching effects of what Shaykh Sadaqat and Shaykh Mahdavi have produced will inshallah be .appreciated for years and generations to come, ameen

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pray to Allah (SWT) to reward them amply and to grant them increased success in their lives in this world and the hereafter.

Shaykh Abbas M H Ismail

Islamic Education

The World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri Muslim Communities

Dhul Qa'dah ۱۴۳۳ / October ۲۰۱۲

Introduction

There are numerous ways for man to achieve guidance and emerge from darkness and move towards light. Allah, for the prosperity of man and perfection of his morals, has created proofs, evidences and vestiges(۱) so great in number that they are beyond reckoning and computation. For the guidance of mankind, He sent the Prophets with Clear Proofs(۲), books, miracles and signs so that perhaps, the people might perceive the right path and attain prosperity and success.

During the entire period of his prophethood, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), with regards to refinement of souls and perfection of morals, was an exemplar in speech and did, and had (even) said, "I have been sent (as a Prophet) for (the purpose of) perfecting the morals"(۳).

Man's problem lies in his disregard for virtues, acquisition of vices, inclination towards lust and obedience to the Shaytan. Some men stoop so low that they even lead their lives akin to animals. For the purpose of refinement and treatment of human morals, abatement of rebelliousness and controlling the natural disposition, the Noble Prophet (s.a.w) spared no effort and mentioned all that was necessary in this regard.

Attainment of prosperity in this world and the hereafter is only accomplished under the auspices of a teacher and at the

۱- Surat Ibrahim (۱۴), Verse ۵: وَ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسى بِآيَاتِنَا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلى النُّورِ

۲- Suratul Hadid (۵۷), Verse ۲۵: لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَ أَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَ الْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

۳- Safinatul Bihar, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱۱: بُعِثْتُ لِأُتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الأَخْلَاقِ

same time, not every person can completely identify the two extremes of moral behaviour in order to demonstrate the moderate and balanced path. Allah, Who is the Absolute Wise, introduced all the Prophets, especially the Noble Prophet (s.a.w), as the 'teacher and trainer' of morals so that the people, by following in his footsteps, distance themselves from vices and acquire the honour of the two worlds.

In the Qur`an, there exists a chapter by the name of القَصَص (The Narratives), which itself is proof that man is in nid of stories and narratives.

In many places in the Qur`an, stories of Prophets, kings and nations have been mentioned. In addition, Allah has presented issues pertaining to wars, peace, family, religion, society and other similar topics, in the form of stories and narratives. By reading these accounts, the people can comprehend and distinguish the paths of progress and regress, and ascent and descent in every field, especially morals.

The entire chapter Yusuf has been devoted to the story of Yusuf, Yaqub, Zulaikha and the brothers. In the beginning of the Chapter, Allah says:

"We narrate to you (O' Prophet) the most excellent of the narratives by (means of) what We have revealed to you this Qur`an."(١)

While, in the concluding verse of this very chapter, He says:

"Indeed (there) in the history of theirs, is a lesson for men of understanding."(٢)

Indeed, one of the distinguished feats of the Qur`an is this very story of Yusuf (a.s.), which it refers to as the 'best of the

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١- Surat Yusuf (١٢), Verse ٣: نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ

٢- Ibid., Verse ١١١: لَقَدْ كَانَ فِی قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِی الْأَلْبَابِ

:narratives' and at the end of which, it says

In these stories there is a lesson for those, who desire to take a moral and adopt the“ ”.path of the Perfect Men

In this regard, Amirul Mo`minin (a.s), in Nahjul Balagha, says to his son Imam Hasan (.(a.s

Even though I have not reached the age, which those before me have, yet I have“ looked into their behaviour and reflected over the events of their lives. I walked amongst their ruins till I was as one of them. In fact, by virtue of those of their affairs that have become known to me, it is as though I have lived with them from the first to the last. I have therefore been able to discern the impure from the clean and the benefit from the harm. I have selected for you the choicest of those matters and ”.collected for you their good points while keeping away from you the useless ones

Years ago, I had written a book on ethics (for the treatment of vices), by the name of Ihya al-Qulub. Ever since, I had been reflecting over the idea of compiling a book on moral stories. It so happened that divinely, an opportunity came up before me and with it the motivation for undertaking this assignment. In spite of the lack of necessary books, I contented myself with those that were available and commenced .the compilation of this book, recording four to five stories for every topic

I have certainly not come across

any book which has been compiled in this fashion. Books like Namunah-e-Maarif-e-Islam and Pand-e-Tarikh have been present for around ۳۰ years and I have made use of them too (in the course of this collection) but in those books, Qur`anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies have all been accumulated together; whereas, I have sought to satisfy myself by mentioning only the stories, while abstaining from presenting considerations relating to Qur`anic verses, traditions, poems and analogies, which would not only have increased the size of the book but would also have made it difficult to understand for many of the readers.

This collection caters for the general public, young and old alike, who are acquainted with basic reading and writing. As far as possible, I have endeavoured to omit scientific issues and those aspects, pertaining to traditions, whose comprehension would be demanding and exacting for the general masses.

Although some of the stories may not possibly possess any aspect of reality and actuality, what I have focused on is the admonition and 'taking-a-lesson' aspect contained in them, which hopefully, the honourable readers would perceive and comprehend.

As far as the issue of associating a story to a particular topic is concerned, I do not claim that the stories allude to just one topic or that particular one which has been specified here; rather there are stories which can be associated with several other topics too, in addition to the topic under which it has been mentioned here.

When narrating a text or presenting

a translation, I have not restricted myself to the literal meaning but, for a better comprehension, have resorted to paraphrasing, allusion and conceptual explanation .too

To avoid interference of topics with one another and prolongation of discussion, I have refrained from bringing forth topics which are related to those already presented. For example, Ithar (altruism) has been presented as one of the topics but .Infaq (spending in the path of Allah) has been excluded

To prevent the reader from experiencing exhaustion and boredom, and for the sake of variety, I have desisted from presenting stories of a monotonous kind, like those of philosophers and poets, but have strived to make the collection varied. In this way, .the readers will hopefully, derive a greater pleasure from the narratives

In view of the fact that trustworthiness ought to be adhered to, I have referred every narrative presented here, to the book from which it has been extracted, also mentioning the volume and page. It is only with the objective of achieving a greater fluency of work that I have endeavoured to correct, polish or alter some of the words .or sentences of the original text

It is hoped that the readers, after going through the stories and narratives, reflect upon and take lessons from them so that they are able to create within themselves, a new impetus towards perfection of morals; and Allah Willing, those who are endowed with laudable morals, should relate them to others, for rectification and remedy of the .weaker souls

Sayyid ‘Ali

Akbar Sadaaqat

:(And our final prayer (is

.All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds

[Mordad, ۱۳۷۸ [July ۱۹۹۹

Knowledge .۶۱

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ عَلَّمَکَ ما لَمْ تَکُنْ تَعْلَمُ

(And He has taught you what you did not know”(۱“

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

لَا یُحِبُّ الْعِلْمَ اِلَّا السَّعِیْدُ

(None loves knowledge except the one, who is fortunate (and prosperous)”(۲“

Short Explanation

The way to attain cognisance of God and the Sharia'h is by means of knowledge. Knowledge is an embellishment for man in this world, and causes its owner to become .one of those with whom God is pleased

One who possesses knowledge, ought to realize that the acquisition of an hour of knowledge demands a life-time of practice (in accordance with the knowledge). Thus, when one seeks to acquire knowledge he should bear in mind that he has to practice what he acquires. This is because God, regarding a scholar that does not act in accordance with the knowledge that he possesses, has said: “From seventy of my punishments (that I would subject him to), the least that I would do to him is to (remove the sweetness of My remembrance from his heart.”(۳

Knowledge does not mean mere memorization of terminologies, or information that is not beneficial, or information that is accompanied by evil intentions such as exhibiting one's scholarly calibre before other scholars - in which case it would only serve to be an encumbrance and burden - rather, it means the comprehension of piety, (divine) cognisance

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١- Qur'an, ۴:١١٣.

٢- Jami' al-Sa'adat, v. ١, p. ١٠۴.

٣- Tadhkirah al-Haqaiq, p. ۵٨.

.and certainty

Al–Hajj Sheikh Abbas Qummi (۱

:The late Sheikh Abbas Qummi, the author of Mafatih al-Jinan narrates

When I had compiled and published the book Manazil al-Akhirah, it reached the“ hands of Sheikh Abd al-Razzaq who used to explain religious rulings daily before .(dhuhr time in the holy courtyard of Hadhrat Ma’sumah (peace be upon her

My father, Kerbalai Muhammad Ridha, was greatly fond of Sheikh Abd al-Razzaq and would attend his sessions every day. The Sheikh had procured the book Manazil al-.Akhirah and used to read from it for his audience

One day my father returned home and said to me: O Sheikh Abbas! I wish you would be like that person, who explains religious rulings, and climb onto the pulpit and recite .from the book in the manner he recited for us today

Several times I felt the urge to tell him that the book was authored by me, but I restrained myself and just said to him: “Pray to God that He may grant (me) grace and (success (for such a venture).” (۱

The Tutor of Jibraeel (۲

Once, Jibraeel was engaged in a conversation with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) when Imam Ali (peace be upon him) entered. As soon as Jibraeel’s eyes fell upon him he stood up and displayed great respect towards him .((peace be upon him

Witnessing this, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) asked: O Jibraeel! For what reason did you display such respect for this young man? Jibraeel replied: How could I not exhibit deference

p: ۸

.Seema-e-Farzanagan, p. ۱۵۳; Mard-e-Taqwa wa Fadhilat, p. ۴۸ -۱

towards him when I am under his obligation by virtue of the fact that he has taught !me

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) inquired: What teaching? Jibraeel replied: After God created me, He questioned me: "Who are you and who am I?" I did not know what to answer and so remained silent for some time whereupon this youth appeared before me in a state of light and taught me that I should say: "You are the Glorious and Beautiful Lord while I am Jibraeel, a lowly servant." And it is for .this reason that when I saw him now, I paid my respects to him

How old are you, Jibraeel? Asked the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny). He replied: O Prophet of God! In the heavens there is a star, which rises once every thirty thousand years, and I have witnessed it thirty thousand times!(١)

The Practicing A'alim (٣

Sheikh Ahmad Ardabili, popularly known as Muqaddas Ardabili (d. ٩٩٣ AH) was an abstentious and practicing scholar, and lived contemporaneous to scholars such as Sheikh Bahaai, Mulla Sadra and Mir Damaad. His grave lies within the holy shrine of Imam Ali (a.s.) in the city of Najaf. It has been reported that once a person had come to Najaf for pilgrimage and not recognising him, had requested him to wash his .clothes

Muqaddas agreed and after washing it, brought it to the pilgrim. It was at this point that the pilgrim happened to become aware

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.Tuhfah al-Majalis, p. ٨٠ -١

of his identity and felt greatly embarrassed at his own behaviour, and the people too rebuked him for his conduct. Muqaddas, however, said:

Why do you censure him? Nothing (significant) has happened. The rights of brethren-in-faith are far more than what I have done for him.(۱)

۴) The Dangers of Possessing Knowledge without Prior Purification (of the Soul)

Ali Ibn Muhammad al-Mawardi, an inhabitant of Basra, was a judge, a teacher of the Shafi'i jurisprudence and a contemporary of Sheikh Tusi. He narrates:

I had expended great effort in writing a book on the religious rulings relating to transaction and business, and had memorized all the details in connection with the topic such that when the book reached completion, it crossed my mind that I was the most learned of all in this topic; I was overcome with pride, conceit and vanity.

One day, two Arab bedouins came to my assembly and sought to know from me the ruling in connection with a transaction that had transpired in their village. The issue also had four other offshoots to it; however I was unable to provide answers to any one of them.

For a while I was lost in thought, I then said to myself: You claim to be the most learned of all your contemporaries in this chapter of jurisprudence; how is it that you are unable to answer the questions of the inhabitants of the village?

Turning to them, I confessed: I do not know the answers. Astonished, they said: You ought to study more in order that you are able to answer the questions.

They left me

۱- Muntakhab al-Tawarikh, p. ۱۸۱.

and proceeded to refer their queries to a person, who in terms of knowledge, was inferior to even some of my students, but when they presented their questions to him, he was able to provide them with the answers. The Bedouins were delighted to hear the answers and praising him, left for their village.

Al-Mawardi says: This incident caused me to come to my senses and extricate my soul from conceit and vanity of knowledge so that I may not incline towards self-praise in the future.(١)

5) Asma'i and the Officious Grocer

Asma'i(٢) narrates:

The initial period of my education was endured in poverty and indigence. Every morning when I would leave my house for acquiring knowledge I would have to pass by an officious grocer who would question me: Where are you going? I would reply: I am going to gain knowledge. On my way back home, he would repeat the same question.

At times, he would say: 'Don't waste your life. Why don't you learn some work so that you can become wealthy and affluent? Give me these books and papers of yours; I shall put them in the wine-jar and you will see nothing shall remain of them.'

He would constantly reproach me as a result of which I would become disturbed, mentally.

Days passed by with such great financial hardships that I would be unable to buy even a garment for myself.

Years passed till one day a messenger of the ruler of Basra approached me and asked me to present myself before the ruler. I said to

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1- Safinah al-Bihar, v. ٢, p. ١۶٢.

A'bd Al-Malik Ibn Qareeb Basri (d. ٢١٣ A.H.) had been of the great narrators of - ٢
.poems and Arab traditions, and has several books to his credit

him: “How can I present myself before him in this torn garment?“ The messenger departed, only to arrive again with some clothes and money. I wore the clothes and arrived before the ruler. He said: I have selected you to educate the Caliph’s son and .so you must proceed to Baghdad

I set off for Baghdad and approached the Abbasid caliph, Harun al-Rashid, who ordered me to educate his son Muhammad Amin. With this, my financial state .gradually became extremely good

Years passed and when Muhammad Amin had achieved a high level of knowledge, Harun desired to test him asked him to deliver a sermon. One Friday, Muhammad delivered an extremely eloquent sermon, which greatly pleased Harun and so, turning to me, said: What do you aspire for? I replied: I wish to return to my birth-place, Basra. He accepted my request and arranged for me to return to Basra with great .honour and esteem

The people of Basra came to meet me and amongst them was the officious grocer. As soon as my eyes fell upon him, I said: Do you observe the fruits which that knowledge ?and those papers have yielded

Apologetic and rueful, he said: I uttered those words out of ignorance. Even though the returns may be delayed, but knowledge does yield returns that possess worldly .and religious benefits

Deeds .۶۲

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

مَن عَمِلَ صاَلحِاً فَلِنَفسِهِ وَ مَن اَساءَ فَعَلَيهاَ

وَمَا رَبُّکَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ

Whoever does good, it is for his own soul, and whoever does evil, it is“

(against it; and your Lord is not in the least unjust to the servants."(1)

:(Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him

كُونُوا دُعَاةَ النَّاسِ بِأَعمَالِكُم وَ لاَ تَكُونُوا دُعَاةً بِأَلسِنَتِكُم

Invite the people (towards guidance) by means of your deeds and not by means of (your tongues(2)

Short Explanation

Since ancient times it has been said that the markets of deeds and actions are bearish; meaning that to a certain extent all the people possess awareness of the rulings of religion, however, when it comes to deeds and actions, they falter and .usually fall short of what is expected of them

All deeds of man are recorded in his Book of Deeds, and only his deeds shall .accompany him after his death

If a person's deeds have been solely for the sake of God and without having trampled the rights of others or offended any person, God shall suffice for him with respect to all his affairs in this world and the hereafter, will regard him with love and affection, .and will exhibit pride over him and his actions before the angels

The Lawful Work (1

:Hasan Ibn Husain Anbari narrates

Over a period of fourteen years I kept writing letters to Imam Ridha (peace be upon him), seeking permission from him to allow me to work within the administrative setup .(of the ruler (of the city

Since the Imam (peace be upon him) never replied, I, in my final letter, wrote: I fear oppression and persecution. Those working with the Sultan say: "You are of the Shiites and this is why you do not co-operate

1- Qur'an, 41:46.

2- Safinah al-Bihar, v. 2, p. 278.

".with us and are evasive

In reply, the Imam (peace be upon him) said: From your letter I sense that you fear for your life. You are aware that if you are placed in a (high and) responsible position, you can adhere to and act upon the teachings and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny); this would cause your subordinates to also follow .the dictates of your faith

If you happen to come across instances whereby you have to deal with poor and indigent Mu'minin, ensure that you exhibit consideration, toleration and forbearance !towards them

And since you would now be working with them, it would be deemed that you are one of them, (and thus) you would have to strive hard to perform God-pleasing deeds, since these deeds would then serve to compensate your co-operation with the illegal .ruling apparatus

However, if you are unable to act in this manner, then it is not permissible for you to (take up this employment.(۱

The Practicing Ones and Paradise (۲

:Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) once related

Once, when my father was seated in the company of his companions, addressing them, he (peace be upon him) said: Which of you is willing to hold flaming fire in his ?hand till the flames die out

All those present, as if to express their inability, lowered their heads and remained !silent

I said: Dear father! Do you permit me to do it? He said: No, dear son! You are from me and I am from you. It is

۱- Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Kuneem, p. ۶۵.

.these people whom I was addressing

After this he repeated his request three times but when no one spoke up, he (peace be upon him) said: How numerous are those who talk and how few are those who act. .I only wanted to have you tested

Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) said: By God! At that moment I observed that they were overcome with such embarrassment that it appeared as if the earth was pulling them towards itself. Perspiration flowed from the foreheads of some, but they did not .raise their lowered eyes

When my father observed their embarrassment, he said to them: May God forgive you! I did not intend anything except goodness. Paradise has many ranks, one of .which pertains to none but those who practice and act

Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) said: After these words (from my father) when I looked at them, they seemed to have calmed down and appeared as if they have (been relieved of a heavy and weighty burden.(۱

The Working Youth (۳

Once, when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was seated with a group of his companions, he observed a strong and robust youth hard at work since the early morning. Those around him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) remarked: Had this youth expended his strength and energy in the way of God, he .would have been worthy of immense commendation and praise

Hearing this, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Do not

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.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, v. ۲, p. ۱۴۰, Kashkool of Bahrani, v. ۲, p. ۹۳ -۱

utter such words, for there are several probabilities that exist; he could be working to earn his sustenance in order that he does not have to depend upon others, in which case he is striving in the way of God. He could be working to look after the needs of his feeble parents and weak children, so that they are not dependent upon other people, .in which case he is again striving in the way of God

However, if by means of this work he seeks to increase his wealth and manifest his superiority over those who are underprivileged, then he has travelled on the path of (Satan and deviated from the right path.(۱

Good) Deeds Cause a Jew to Become a Muslim) (۴

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) once owed a few dinars to a Jew. One day, the Jew sought his money from him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), whereupon he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Presently I do not have any money. The Jew said: I shall not leave you till you repay .my money

Hearing this, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: If that is the case then I too shall sit by you here. He (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) sat down beside the Jew and continued to do so for such a long period that he recited .his Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib, Isha and the morning prayers of the next day, right there

Observing the

.Dunyaa-e-Jawaanaan, p. ۳۱۶; Mahajjah al-Baydha, v. ۳, p. ۱۴۰ -۱

state of affairs, the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) began to threaten the Jew, but he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to them: What is this that you are doing?

How can a Jew hold you a captive? They replied. Hearing this, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) explained: God has not sent me as a Prophet in order that I permit those, who have established a religious covenant with me, to be oppressed.

Till sunrise of the next day he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) continued to be seated there, whereupon the Jew, addressing the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), said: O Prophet of God! By God! It was not impertinence and audaciousness that prompted me to behave in the manner I did with you; rather, I desired to know whether the traits mentioned in the Torah about the Final Prophet, conformed with you or not?

This is because I have read in the Torah that Muhammad Ibn Abdullah would be born in Makkah, and subsequently emigrate to Medina; he would neither possess a bad temperament, nor would he be discourteous. He would not speak with a loud voice and would not be foul-mouthed and abusive.

I now bear witness to the Unity of God and to your Prophethood, and I place my entire wealth at your disposal for you to utilise in whatsoever manner God commands

(you to. (1)

The Conduct of Mua'wiyah and Abu al-Aswad Du'ali (5

Mua'wiyah, in order to attract people towards himself, would usually send them money, honey or other similar gifts. Impoverished people who could not even afford curd to satiate their hunger, would suddenly receive leather sacs of honey from Mua'wiyah, which at times would even contain money which he would place in them. All this was done to ensure that they do not incline towards Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him). Those who would be willing to reject the money and also refuse to abandon Ali (peace be upon him) were very miniscule in number.

One day Mua'wiyah sent some sacs of honey for Abu al-Aswad Du'ali,(2) one of the companions of Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him), in order to attract him towards himself. Abu al-Aswad Du'ali was in the mosque when he was handed Mua'wiyah's letter and told: Sacs of honey have been delivered to your house.

Just as he reached home, he observed that his five year old daughter was about to put a finger, coated with honey, into her mouth. Seeing this, he shouted: O My Daughter! Do not eat it for it is poison. The girl immediately wiped her finger in the mud, and (after he had explained the situation to her) recited a couplet: O Son of Hind! Do you wish to destroy our faith and religion by means of pure honey? Never shall our support cease for Ali (peace be upon him).

Abu al-Aswad, holding Mua'wiyah's letter in one hand and his daughter's hand in

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1- Daastaan-ha-e-Zindagi-e-Payaambar, p. 82; Bihar al-Anwar, v. 16, p. 16.

2- He died due to plague, in the city of Basrah, at the age of eighty five and had witnessed the lives of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), Amir al-Mu'minin, Imam Hassan, Imam Husayn and Imam Sajjad (peace be upon them) in the course of his lifetime. He is credited with writing, upon the instructions and assistance of Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him), a book on nahw (Arabic

.grammar) and placing dots on the Arabic letters that form the words of the Qur’an

the other, approached the Imam (peace be upon him) and recited his daughter's verses for him (peace be upon him). Hearing them, the Imam (peace be upon him) smiled and prayed for both of them.(1)

63. Food

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ يُطعِمُونَ الطَّعامَ عَلىَ حُبِّهِ مِسكِيناً وَ يَتِيماً وَ اَسِيراً

"And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive"(2)

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said:

إنَّ الاِطعامَ مِن مُوجِباَتِ الجَنَّهِ وَ المَغفِرَه

"Surely, feeding (others) is one of the causes for forgiveness (of sins) and entering into Paradise"(3)

Short Explanation

Do know that eating less for the well-being of one's interior and exterior self is always recommended. Consuming food is indispensable for the body and is necessary for procuring strength for performing acts of worship and other needful tasks. However, eating excessively causes the heart to become hard and cruel, passions to be aroused and the body to become sick. It ought to be noted that procurement of food by lawful means is mandatory; all the prophets and the auliya (friends of God) always abstained from impure, unlawful and dubious food, and constantly endeavoured to procure their livelihoods by lawful means. This is because the foremost of the achievements and successes is attained by means of the morsels that enter into the stomach.

1) The Excessive Eater and the Moderate Eater

Two mystics from Khorasan set out on a journey together. One of them was weak, consuming food only once in two nights, while the other was strong and

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۱- Khazinah al-Jawahir, p. ۵۳۶.

۲- Qur'an, ۷۶:۸.

۳- Safinah al-Bihar, v. ۲, p. ۸۳.

.healthy, eating food three times a day

As fate would have it, when they happened to be near a city both of them were taken into custody, charged with spying for the enemies, imprisoned in a house and the door of the house was locked and sealed. A couple of weeks later it came to be known that they were not spies but two innocent people. When the house was opened, it was observed that the strong mystic had died while the weak one was still alive. The fact that it was the stronger of the two, who had died caused great astonishment amongst .the people

Coming to know of the bewilderment of the people, a learned doctor from amongst them said: On the contrary, it would have been a matter of great astonishment had the weak mystic died; the death of the strong one was caused by the fact that being an excessive eater, he could not get himself to endure these fourteen days without food, whereas the weak one, being accustomed to eating less, was able to endure (this adversity and managed to survive.(١

Food with Friendship (٢

:Abd al-Rahman Ibn Hajjaj narrates

We were in the house of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) and were having food with him when some more rice was brought for us. We sought to excuse ourselves from eating more whereupon the Imam (peace be upon him) said: Whoever likes us more .shall consume more food with us

Hearing this, we once again sat down and began eating the

.Hikaayat-ha-e-Gulistaan, p. ١٥۴ -١

.food. Witnessing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) stated: This is so much better

He (peace be upon him) then continued: One day, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was presented with some rice, whereupon he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) invited Salman, Abu Dharr and Miqdad to join him in eating it. They sought to excuse themselves but he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) insisted: "Whoever likes us more ought to eat more with us." Hearing this, all (of them ate to their full.(١

One Morsel and Selling One's Faith (٣

:Fadhl Ibn Rabi' relates

Once, Sharik Ibn Abdullah Nakhai' arrived before Mahdi Abbasi, the third Abbasid Caliph, who said to him: You must accept to perform one of these three tasks: Become .a judge in the judicial setup, educate my children, or eat my food

Sharik thought that teaching the Caliph's children was a tough proposition; becoming a judge was tougher; however, eating the Caliph's food appeared to be simple and so he accepted the third option. Mahdi instructed the cook to prepare various kinds of .delicacies which were then brought before Sharik, who satiated himself with them

The kitchen attendant said to Mahdi: O Caliph! This sheikh, after consuming these (delicacies, shall never attain salvation.(٢

:Fadhl Ibn Rabi' states

By God! After consuming that food, not only did Sharik began to increase his association with the Bani Abbas and agree to educate their children, but also consented to become the judge. Once, Sharik's pay-slip, which was used to collect

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١- Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, p. ٢۶; Mahajjah al-Baydha, v. ٣, p. ٢٢.

٢- لَيسَ يُفلحُ الشّيخُ بَعدَ هَذِهِ الاَكلَهِ اَبَداً

his salary from the treasury, was handed over to him. When he approached the treasurer for his pay he insisted that he be paid immediately in cash. Noting his insistence, the treasurer said to him: You have not sold linen or an expensive garment .that you insist so vehemently on receiving immediate cash payment

Hearing this, Sharik retorted: By God! I have sold something that is more precious (than linen – I have sold my religion!(۱

The Blessing is in the Bread (۴

(The Blessing is in the Bread(۲

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said: Regard bread with great esteem for most of the entities that exist between the Arsh (Throne) and the earth have some form of contribution in making and preparing it. He (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) then said: Previous to you, there lived a Prophet by the name of Daniyal. One day he gave a loaf of bread to a pauper, who, upon receiving it frowned and flung it in the middle of the road, saying: What can I do with a loaf of .bread, which has no worth

When Daniyal witnessed this he raised his hands towards the skies and said: Honour !bread with a lofty rank

Due to that reprehensible act of that person, God withheld the rains from pouring and prohibited the earth from bringing forth its vegetation. Circumstances became so .adverse that people resorted to cannibalism, and began eating one another

Two women, each of them possessing two children, decided amongst themselves that one

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۱- .Pand-e-Taareekh, v. ۴, p. ۸۶; Muruj al-Dhahab, v. ۳, p. ۳۲۰

۲- The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said: اللَّهُمَّ بـارِك لَنَا فِي الخُبز and also اَكرِمُوا الخُبز

day the child of one woman would be eaten while the next day it would be the turn of the child of the other. On that day one child was consumed; however the next day, the mother of the other child whose turn it was to be eaten, refused to give her child. This led to a great dispute between them until eventually they approached Daniyal and .placed their issue before him

When he came to realise the condition of the people, he prayed to God, Who then (opened the doors of His mercy upon them.(١

The Food of Death (۵

After the death of Mu'tasim Abbasi (d. ٢٢٧ AH), his son Harun, titled Waathiq Billaah Abbasi, became the Caliph. It has been recorded that he was immensely fond of sexual intercourse, and so requested his doctor to provide him a concoction that .would serve to increase his sexual strength

Excessive sexual intercourse wastes away the body and I do not want your body to be wasted, the doctor advised. But Waathiq insisted: You have got to prepare it for .me

The doctor, seeing no alternative, set about to prepare the concoction; he ordered meat of wild beasts to be boiled seven times in vinegar that was procured from wine. This meat was to be consumed in a measure equivalent to the weight of ۵۴ peas, after .drinking wine

However, Waathiq consumed more than the prescribed quantity and before long was afflicted with dropsy. The doctors were unanimous in their opinion that his stomach would have to be split open

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, v. ١, p. ٢٧۶; Safinah al-Bihar, v. ١, p. ٣٧۵ -١

.after which he would have to be placed within a furnace heated by means of olive oil

They then set about putting their suggestion into execution and, despite his repeated requests, refrained from providing him water for ٣ hours till large boils manifested .themselves upon his body, whereupon he was taken out of the furnace

Do not place me in the furnace again for I shall surely die, he beseeched, but once again they put him inside. When the boils burst they pulled him out of the furnace in a .state that his entire body had turned black; he died shortly afterwards

A cloth was placed over his dead body, and his corpse lay forgotten and unattended as the people soon became occupied in pledging allegiance to his brother Mutawakkil. (Thus, in the year ٢٣٢ AH, at the age of ٣۴, he succumbed to his food of death.(١

Pride .۶۴

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ

Know that this world's life is only sport and play and gaiety and boasting among“ (yourself”(٢

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

لمثقال ذره من صاحب تقوی و یقین اءفضل من مل ء الاءرض من المغترین

An atom's weight of good deed by a person, possessing piety and firm faith is better“ than good deeds that are so numerous so as to fill the earth, by one, who is (conceited.”(٣

Short Explanation

A conceited person is (in reality) underprivileged in this world and would be left cheated in the hereafter. One ought

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۱- Tatimmah al-Muntaha, p. ۲۳۱.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hadeed (۵۷), vs. ۲۰.

۳- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۳, pg. ۵.

not to be proud and conceited with respect to one's wealth, family, soundness of health, leadership, authority and the likes of these, for all of these are transitory and shall not remain forever.

Man, as a result of possessing a good life or attaining some of his personal desires, should never become conceited; at times it so happens that these themselves become causes of adversity and calamity for man.

If one happens to perform numerous acts of worship or develops a fear of God or becomes repentant (over past misdeeds), it is better for him to thank God for having granted him this state of mind than to receive praise from people. This is because praise and extolment of people is a scourge which brings about pride, conceit and heedlessness (towards God).

On the Day of Judgment, the greatest loser and the most remorseful of all would be one, who was proud and conceited (in this world).(١)

The Inner Pride (١

Some of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) were seen to be constantly praising a particular person in his (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) presence. One day they saw him while they were with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and pointing to him said: That is the person whom we used to praise.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) looked at the person and said: I am witnessing on his face a satanic blackness. As the

١- Tadhkerah al-Haqaaiq.

person came near and greeted him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to him: I place you under the oath of God; tell me, did you not say to yourself: “Amongst the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) there is none, who is superior ”?to and better than me

.The person confessed: Yes, the thought did pass my mind

In this manner the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), by means) (of his inner vision, informed him of his inner conceit and pride.)(١

Pride with Respect to one’s Wealth and Children (٢

Aas Ibn Wail was an irreligious person, who used to ridicule the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny). He was the one who had referred to him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) by means of that outrageous title of abtar - meaning .one without a son and lineage

He left behind an equally unworthy son by the name of Amr Ibn Aas, who was the mastermind behind the policies of artifice and deception of Mua'wiyah against Imam .(Ali (peace be upon him

One of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) :reports

Aas Ibn Wail owed me some money and so, approaching him I sought my money from him. However, he refused saying: I shall not give you your money. I said to him: In that case I shall collect my dues from

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.Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, pg. ٣٧٨, Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۶, pg. ٢٩٨ -١

.you in the hereafter

In the hereafter, if at all it exists, I would have numerous children and great riches; if I go there and you too happen to come there, I shall return your money to you! He replied with an air of supreme arrogance and conceit.

God revealed the following verses to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny):

أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتَيَنَّ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا

أَطَّلَعَ الْغَيْبَ أَمِ اتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَٰنِ عَهْدًا

كَلَّا ۚ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ لَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مَدًّا

"Have you, then, seen him who disbelieves in Our communications and says: I shall certainly be given wealth and children? Has he gained knowledge of the unseen, or made a covenant with the Beneficent? By no means! We write down what he says, and We will lengthen to him the length of the chastisement."(۱),(۲)

The Proud Champion (۳

Once, there was a champion wrestler, who by utilising his great skills and defeating all his opponents, had come to acquire great fame for himself.

His overwhelming strength and power filled him with such pride and conceit that one day, looking towards the heavens, he called out: O Lord! Now arrange to send down Jibraeel so that I can test my strength against him, for on this earth there is none that can stand up against my strength.

Before long God afflicted him with weakness and frailty, and in order to crush his vanity, reduced him to such a state of penury that he was forced to live in the ruins of dilapidated houses.

۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Maryam (۱۹), vs. ۷۷-۷۹ .أَ فَرَأَيتَ الَّذِى ... مِنَ الْعَذاَبِ مَدّاً

۲- Hikayaat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۵۷, Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۶, pg. ۲۰۴.

So overcome was he with weakness that one day when he placed his head upon a brick to rest, a mouse darted over his face and began nibbling his toes, but he did not possesses the strength to even pull his legs away from the nibbling rodent.

A holy person, who happened to pass by him, observed his state and said: God has made one of his smallest soldiers to become dominant over you in order that you realise your mistake and repent over your conceited behaviour. God, in addition to being The Patient, is also The Concerned and if you seek forgiveness, He shall surely grant you soundness of health.(۱)

۴) The Scholar of Arabic Grammar

Once, there was a person who had studied and acquired such immense mastery over Arabic grammar that people referred to him as the 'scholar of Arabic grammar'.

One day he boarded a ship and, since he prided himself on his knowledge of Arabic grammar, turning to the captain of the ship, asked: Have you studied Arabic grammar? No, replied the captain of the ship. Hearing this, the scholar criticised: Then you have wasted half of your life!

This criticism greatly hurt and disturbed the captain, but he kept quiet and did not say anything. The ship continued on its way when suddenly a storm struck as a result of which it found itself caught in the midst of a whirlpool and was on the verge of sinking.

Observing this, the captain, who knew how to swim, asked the scholar: Do you

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۱- Rangaarang, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱۱.

know to swim? The scholar replied: No. Hearing this, the captain remarked: Then your !entire life is about to be wasted, for the ship is about to sink and you cannot swim

It was then that the scholar became aware of his conceit and came to realise that the best knowledge is that which man utilises to eliminate the vices that exist within him (so that he does not drown in the sea of pride and vanity.(۱

The Arrogance of Abu Jahl (۵

One night Abu Jahl, the most obstinate enemy of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), was circumambulating the Ka'bah in the company of Walid Ibn Mughirah, and while engaged in the act, began to speak about him (peace be upon .(him and his holy progeny

.Abu Jahl said: By God! He speaks the truth

?Walid rebuked: Keep quiet! How do you speak such a thing

Abu Jahl replied: We knew him, from his childhood, to be a truthful and trustworthy person. How could he, after having grown up and his intellect having matured, ?become a liar and a traitor

Walid said: If this is the case, then why don't you testify to his truthfulness and accept Islam? Abu Jahl said: Do you desire the womenfolk of the Quraish to say that I, Abu Jahl, have submitted myself out of fear of defeat. By the idols Lat and Uzza, I shall .never follow him

:(Due to this pride and haughtiness, God revealed the following verse(۲

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ

p: ۲۹

۱- .Daastaan-ha-e-Mathnawi, vol. ۱, pg. ۵۲

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Jaathiyah (۴۵), vs. ۲۳. خَتَمَ عَلیَ سَمَعِهِ وَ قَلبِهِ وَ جَعَلَ عَلیَ بَصَرِهِ غِشاَوَةً

وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Have you then considered him who takes his low desire for his god, and Allah has" made him err having knowledge and has set a seal upon his ear and his heart and put (a covering upon his eye."(١)

Anger .۶۵

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لا تَتَوَلَّوْا قَوْماً غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ

(O you who believe! Do not make friends with a people with whom Allah is wroth."(٢"

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

الْغَضَبُ يُفْسِدُ الْإِيمَانَ كَمَا يُفْسِدُ الْخَلُّ الْعَسَلَ

(Anger corrupts faith just as vinegar corrupts honey."(٣"

Short Explanation

One of the harmful diseases, which possesses numerous ill-effects and also causes aggravation of the nerves, is anger. This is especially so if it creates a feeling of .vengefulness and malice, for then its harm becomes twofold

Anger that manifests itself while battling the infidels or opposing someone who seeks to inflict harm upon one's reputation, family, etc., is not only regarded as .commendable by religion and intellect, but is also a sign of courage and valour

But in instances other than the above, anger is from the whisperings of Shaitan and a key to all evils. It destroys intellect and forces changes in the physical and mental disposition of man by altering the colour of the face and the eyes, and bringing about mental aggravation and stress; it is also accompanied by other effects such as abuses, taunts, violence, ridicule, murder and other similar

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۱- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol ۵, pg. ۸۵, Tafseer Iraqi, vol. ۲۵, pg. ۲۷.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mumtahanah (۶۰), vs. ۱۳.

۳- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۸۸.

.acts

It is better to stay away from all such things that induce anger, and repel it by (practicing patience and forbearance.(۱

Dhul Kifl (۱

When the life of Prophet Elisha was nearing its end, he decided it was time to appoint his successor. With this in mind, he gathered the people and said: Whosoever from amongst you undertakes to perform three things, I shall make him my successor: To .fast during the days, to remain awake during the nights and abstain from anger

A youth by the name of U'waidiya, who apparently did not possess a great status in the eyes of the people, stood up and said: I am willing to accept the undertaking. The next day when Prophet Elisha repeated his words, once again it was only this youth who stood up to accept the offer, and so Prophet Elisha appointed him as his .successor; shortly afterwards he departed from the world

(God granted Prophethood to the youth, who was none other than Prophet Dhul Kifl.(۲

Once, Shaitaan resolved to make him angry and thus cause him to break his pledge, and so appointing a satan by the name of Abyadh for this task, commanded him: Go .and make him angry

Dhul Kifl would usually remain awake during the nights and sleep a little during the day. Abyadh waited till he had gone to sleep; then, approaching him, he shouted: I have been oppressed and have suffered injustice. Grant me justice from my !oppressor

Dhul Kifl said: Go and bring the person before me. The

p: ۳۱

۱- .Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ۵۶

۲- .He was one of the prophets and lived after the period of Prophet Sulaiman

satan said: I shall not move from here since I know he shall not come with me. Giving him his ring, Dhul Kifl asked him to take it to the oppressor and ask him to come in his .presence

Abyadh took possession of the ring and departed. The next day arriving again, he wailed: I have been oppressed; the oppressor disregarded your ring and refused to !come with me

Dhul Kifl's doorkeeper said: Let him rest, for neither did he sleep yesterday nor has he slept the whole of last night. But Abyadh insisted: I shall not let him sleep; I have been .oppressed

Hearing this, Dhul Kifl wrote a letter and handed it to Abyadh so that he could show it .to the oppressor who would then present himself before Dhul Kifl

On the third day, no sooner had Dhul Kifl closed his eyes when Abyadh appeared again and woke him up to state that the person still refused to come. This time Dhul Kifl took hold of Abyadh's hand and, without any sign of anger, set off in the sun to talk .to the person

Realizing he had failed in his task of making Dhul Kifl angry, Abyadh slipped away from (him and took to flight.(۱

?Who is the Strong One (۲

Once, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) happened to be passing by a locality when he noticed a large crowd. In the midst of the people stood a strong and powerful man, who was exhibiting his strength by lifting a gigantic

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.Taareekh-e-Anbiya, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۹۶ -۱

stone, which the people referred to as 'stone of the strong ones' and 'weight of the champions'. The spectators, visibly impressed over his display of strength, were seen .complimenting and praising him

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) questioned: Why have these people gathered here? Some people, informing him of the weight-lifting acts of .the champion, said: A person is displaying his strength

Hearing this, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Should I inform you, who (in reality) is a strong person and a champion? A champion is one, who, when someone abuses him, does not get enraged, exhibits tolerance, prevails over his ego (and gains dominance over the satan of his self.(١

One Advice (٣

Once, a person approached the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and said: Impart me knowledge and teach me the rulings of religion. He .(peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Go and refrain from getting enraged

The man said: This very sentence shall suffice for me, and then proceeded to return .to his tribe

When he reached his tribe he observed that dispute had arisen amongst them and having armed themselves, they stood facing each other ready for battle. Observing this, the man too put on his battle-dress ready to join his friends for battle when suddenly he recollected the words of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his .holy progeny) asking him to abstain from anger

Dropping his weapons, he proceeded

Iblees Naameh, vol. ١, pg. ٧۵; Majmua-e-Warraam, vol. ٢, pg. ١٠. The late Sheikh - ١ Saduq has reported in his book Ma'ani al-Akhbaar, that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had stated three things in connection with a person,

who is a champion – one of them being that when he is enraged, his anger does not .distance him from truthful and correct speech

towards the opposition and began to reason with them: Battle and war shall not yield !anything. I shall pay you from my own wealth whatever you desire

Realizing the truth of his words, they acquiesced: We are more deserving of .disregarding and ignoring the differences that have taken place

And thus, by this advice of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), (a major conflict was averted.(١

The Imam (peace be upon him) and the Slave (۴

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) had sent his servant out to perform a task for him. When a long time had passed and he had not returned, the Imam (peace be upon him) set out in search for him. After searching for a while, the Imam (peace be upon him) found him asleep.

Without the slightest exhibition of anger, the Imam (peace be upon him) sat down near his head and began to fan him till he woke up from his sleep. After he had woken up, he (peace be upon him) said to him: By God! It does not befit you that you sleep during the night as well as during the day. You ought to sleep during the night, but (work for us during the day.(٢

Bad Disposition and the Servants (۵

Abdullah Ibn Taahir, after the death of his brother Talhah (d. ٢١٣ A.H.), was appointed the governor of Khorasan. He continued to rule over it till the time of Al-Waathiq Billah and, after seventeen years of governorship, died in the year ٢٣٠ A.H. at the age of .forty eight

:Abdullah Ibn Taahir relates

One day

.Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, pg. ٣٠۵, Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۵, pg. ٢٩٣ -١

.Muntahal Aa’maal, vol. ۲, pg.۱۳۰ -۲

when I was with the Abbasid Caliph, none of the servants were seen to be around. Observing this, the Caliph called out: O' Slave! O' Slave! A Turkish slave suddenly :appeared and discourteously said to the Caliph

The servants too have important tasks to do for themselves such as eating, using the lavatory, performing ablutions, offering prayers and sleeping; just as we go out for some important task you raise your voice and holler out O' Slave! ' Slave! How long will ?you go on saying: O' Slave

Abdullah says: Hearing this outburst, the Caliph lowered his head; I was convinced !that the moment the Caliph raised his head he would order the slave to be beheaded

However, when the Caliph raised his head after a few moments, he said to me: O' Abdullah! When the masters conduct themselves in a good manner, the slaves become ill-mannered; (however) we cannot become ill-mannered in order that the slaves behave in a good manner (Meaning that the slaves misuse the patience and (tolerance of their masters).(١

Backbiting .۶۶

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ لا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضاً

(nor let some of you, backbite others"(٢..."

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

إن الغيبه أشد من الزنا

(Surely, backbiting is worse than fornication"(٣"

Short Explanation

.Backbiting is prohibited for every Muslim and one who indulges in it is a sinner

Whenever backbiting about a person has taken place, and he comes to know of it, .forgiveness ought to be sought from him

Backbiting eats away the good

p: ۳۵

.Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ۹۴ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat (۴۹), vs. ۱۲ -۲

.Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۳۰۲ -۳

deeds just as fire eats away the fire-wood. Backbiting could occur for several reasons: out of envy, for beautifying one's speech, for mitigating one's anger, due to hatred towards the person, and the likes of these - all of which are detrimental for the soul, and shall cause a person to face numerous punishments on the Day of Judgment.(١)

They Stopped the Backbiters (١

Once during the time of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), a person happened to pass by a group that was seated. Seeing the person pass by, one of them said: I harbour enmity towards him for the sake of God. The others retorted: By God! You have surely uttered an evil utterance! We shall inform him of what you have stated. And they did just that.

Coming to know of this talk about him, the person approached the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and complained to him about that person's statement. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) summoned him and sought to know if he had uttered such words. The man replied: Yes, I did say it.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) asked: Why do you possess animosity towards him? He replied: I am his neighbour and am fully aware of his state. By God! I have never seen him offer any other prayer save the obligatory ones!

The other man spoke out: O' Prophet of God! Ask him if he

١- Tadhkerah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ۴٨.

has ever seen me delay my obligatory prayers, or perform ablutions incorrectly or not ?perform my ruku' and sujood correctly

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) asked, the other person replied in the negative, but then continued: By God! With the exception of the month of Ramadhan, in which every person, whether pious or a sinner, observes !fasts, I have never seen him fasting

The other person countered: O' Prophet of God! Ask him if he has ever seen me not fasting in the month of Ramadhan, or disregarded any of the religious rulings ?associated with it

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) enquired, the person again replied in the negative, but then added: By God! With the exception of the zakat, which every person – pious or otherwise, does make it a point to pay, I !have never seen him give any alms to a pauper or a fakir

Defending himself, the other person again said to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny): Ask him if he has ever seen me pay out the zakaat less than what was due upon me, or haggle with those who had come to collect it from .me? When asked, the man said: No

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), then turning to that man, said: Go away from my presence, for it is highly probable that he may be better than and superior to

(you.(1

The Punishment for Backbiting, on the Day of Judgment (2

:Sheikh Bahaai (may the mercy (of God) be upon him) says

Once it so happened that in a prominent gathering, in my absence, I became the topic of conversation. I came to know that one of those present in the gathering, although claiming to be my friend was not truthful in his claim, began backbiting about and :speaking ill of me; fully heedless of the verse in which God says

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَحِيمٌ

nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his..." (dead brother? But you abhor it."(2

Later when he came to know that I had become aware of his act, he wrote me a lengthy letter in which he expressed his repentance over the deed and sought .forgiveness from me

:Replying to his letter, I wrote

May God reward you for the gift that you sent for me! This is because your gift shall !cause the scale of my good deeds to become heavier on the Day of Judgment

It has been narrated that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: "On the Day of Judgment, a person shall be brought forth for the reckoning of his deeds; his good deeds shall be placed in one pan of the balance while his evil deeds would be placed

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١- I'lm-e-Akhlaaq-e-Islami, vol. ٢, pg. ٣٩٩.

٢- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hujaraat, vs. ١٢. وَ لا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضاً أَ يُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتاً فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ

in the other and it would be observed that the pan of evil deeds was heavier than that of the good deeds. At this juncture, a sheet of paper would be placed upon his good deeds as a result of which, the pan containing his good deeds would become heavier .than the one containing his sins

Astonished, the person would ask: 'O' Lord! All the good deeds that I possessed had been placed in the pan, so what is this sheet of paper?' I have never performed this .good act

He would be informed: 'This is in exchange for those evils that were spoken about` ".'you but which you did not possess

Sheikh Bahaai continues in his letter): This tradition compels me to thank you for the) .gift that you have presented to me

Although, had you acted in this manner or even worse, in front of me, let me assure you that you would not have witnessed any response from me except forgiveness, pardon, friendship and faithfulness. The years of life that remain are much too precious to waste in attempting to punish individuals for their deeds; rather, it ought to be spent in reflecting over that which has been lost and attempting to make (amends for that which has passed.(۱

Impediment for the Rains (۳

One year, the Bani Israel were afflicted with famine and drought. When Prophet Musa (peace be upon him) had offered the prayers for rain on numerous occasions and yet there was no sign of rains, God revealed to him (peace

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.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۵, pg. ۱۶۰; Kashkool, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۹۶ -۱

be upon him): I have not answered your prayers because of one person from .amongst you, who constantly engages in backbiting and calumny

When he (peace be upon him) asked: O' Lord! Who is that person?, God revealed: O' Musa! How can I backbite when I command you to refrain from backbiting? Tell all the .people to seek forgiveness in order that I answer their prayers

When all the people had sought forgiveness, God showered them with His mercy in (the form of rains.(۱)

In another tradition it has been reported that the person had backbitten about Musa) (peace be upon him), who then requested God to reveal the person's identity to him. Hearing this God said: I consider carrying of tales to be abhorrent and reprehensible, ?and yet you desire that I should indulge in it Myself

A Thousand Lashings (۴

Once Haroon al-Rashid, received some distinguished, classy and pricey garments as gifts, which he gifted to his (Shiite) minister Ali Ibn Yaqteen; amongst them was a cuirass of fur and golden embroidery that, due to is grandeur and magnificence, .resembled the garments worn by emperors

Ali Ibn Yaqteen sent those garments to Imam Kadhim (peace be upon him) along with numerous other riches. The Imam (peace be upon him) however, returned the cuirass back to him and wrote him a letter advising: Keep it with you and do not take it out of .your house; a time shall come when you shall be in need of it

A few days later Ali Ibn Yaqteen happened to

.Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۷۷ -۱

become infuriated with one of his slaves, and had him dismissed from service. This slave presented himself before Haroon al-Rashid and complained: Ali Ibn Yaqteen believes in the Imamate of Musa Ibn Ja’far (peace be upon him) and sends his khums to him (peace be upon him) every year. Even the cuirass that you had gifted to him !was sent to Musa Ibn Ja'far (peace be upon him) on such and such day

Haroon was furious when he heard this and said: I must get to the bottom of this mystery, and then ordered that Ali Ibn Yaqteen be immediately summoned before .him

When he had arrived, Haroon hollered: What have you done with the cuirass that I ?had given to you

Ali Ibn Yaqteen replied: It is in the house. I have wrapped it up in a piece of cloth and .every morning and evening I open it for the sake of blessedness

.Haroon ordered: Bring it to me right away

The cuirass is wrapped in a piece of cloth inside such and such trunk, which is located in such and such room, Ali Ibn Yaqteen directed one of his slaves, and asked him to .bring it to him. The slave did as he was told and brought the cuirass

When Haroon observed that the cuirass given by him was perfumed and wrapped in a piece of cloth, his fury subsided and he said: “Take this back to your house; ”henceforth I shall never pay heed to anything is spoken against you

He then gave

numerous presents to Ali Ibn Yaqteen. As for the slave, he ordered that he be subjected to a thousand lashes; hardly had he been lashed five hundred times when he died.(۱)

The Telltale Slave (۵

A person wished to purchase a slave and so set out for the slave market. There, a slave was shown to him and told: This slave possesses no flaw except that he is a telltale. The person agreed and, purchasing the slave, brought him to his house.

After a few days had passed, this slave approached his master's wife and said to her: "Your husband does not love you anymore and intends to take another woman as a wife for himself. If you wish, I could cast a magic charm on him so as to spellbind him for you; however, for that I would need you to procure a few strands of his hair for me.

How can I bring his hair for you?, the wife asked.

The slave said: When he is asleep, cut some of his hair by means of a razor and bring them to me so that I can do something by means of which he begins to love you!

He then approached the husband and said to him: Your wife has found a paramour for herself and desires to kill you, so beware.

The man feigned himself to be asleep; observing this, his wife entered the room with a razor in hand. The husband, thinking that his wife had come to kill him, jumped up from his place and

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۱- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۱, pg. ۵۲; Kashkool Bahraani, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۳۲.

.killed her

.Coming to know this incident, the wife's relatives came and murdered the husband

When the husband's tribe was informed of this act, they rose up in arms against the wife's tribe which led to violence, battle, killing and bloodshed between the two tribes; this enmity and confrontation between the two tribes continued to exist for a very long time!(١)

Obscene Language .۶۷

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ لا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْواً

"And do not abuse those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest exceeding the limits they should abuse Allah"(٢)

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

إن الله لا يحب الفحش و التفحش

"Surely, Allah does not like obscene language and abusiveness"(٣)

Short Explanation

Utterance of vulgar, reprehensible and dirty things is referred to as obscene language. One, who speaks obscene language lacks modesty and shame, and possesses a tongue that is filthy and impure.

Obscene language is prohibited and its evil effects are numerous. It ought to be realized that evil acts manifested by a person externally, is indicative of evil that exists within him internally.

God does not approve of obscene language and hence a (true) Mu'min can never be foulmouthed. Obscene language is an offshoot hypocrisy and Shaitaan, by means of

.this vice, seeks to develop a friend for himself

Of course, there are ways by means of which man can protect himself from using obscene language such as binding himself by means of vows and oaths, staying away from foulmouthed individuals, engaging in the remembrance

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.Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, pg. ۳۰۲; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۱, pg. ۲۸۹ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Ana'am (۶), vs. ۱۰۸ -۲

.Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۱۴ -۳

(of God, recitation of lofty supplications, ethical poems and the like.(1)

The Imam's Reaction (1

:A'mr Ibn Nu'man Ju'fi relates

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) had a companion, who used to constantly accompany him (peace be upon him) wherever he (peace be upon him) would go, and .(never separate from him (peace be upon him

Once when the Imam (peace be upon him) was travelling to a place called Hadhaain, .this person together with his slave, also joined the Imam

In the course of this journey, the person looked around but saw that his servant was not to be seen. Three times he looked for him but failed to locate him. On the fourth try he found him; as soon as his eyes fell upon him, he yelled out in anger: O' Son of an ?adulteress! Where have you been

As soon as these words reached the ears of the Imam (peace be upon him), he slapped his forehead and said: Subhanallah! You have ascribed an evil act to his mother! All along I had regarded you as a pious individual, however now I have .realized that you have no piety

May I be made your ransom! But his mother is of the polytheists (and so there is .nothing wrong in the allegation), said the man, trying to justify his statement

The Imam (peace be upon him) remarked: Do you not know that every community !has its own customs of marriage, which need to be respected. Go away from me

The narrator of this tradition comments: From that day onwards, I

.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ۶۵ -۱

never saw him in the company of the Imam (peace be upon him) for as long as they (were alive.(۱

Usaamah's Reply (۲

Usaamah Ibn Zaid was one of those who had been set free by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), and about whom the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: He is of those individuals, whom I am particularly fond of and is one of the pious ones from amongst you. Just before his (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) death, he (peace be upon him) appointed .Usaamah, despite his young age, as the commander of the army

It has been reported that one day Usaamah was engaged in prayers in the Prophet's Mosque near the grave of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny). In the meantime, since a person had died, the people approached Marwaan Ibn Hakam, the ruler of Medinah, to lead the funeral prayers for the deceased. He arrived, led the prayers and was on the way out when he observed Usaamah standing near the door of the house of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) still engaged in his prayers. Realizing that he had not participated in the funeral prayers that he had led, a greatly offended Marwan spoke out: You want the people to see you engaged in prayers, isn't it? He then followed this up with a tirade of .abuses and obscene language

After

۱- أَ ماَ عَلِمْتَ اَنَّ لِكُلِّ قَومٍ نِكاَحاً

completing his prayers, Usaamah came up to Marwaan and said: You have hurt me and used obscene and abusive language towards me. I have heard the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) say: "God abhors a person, who uses obscene and abusive language.(1)

3) Satan in the Company of Those Using Foul Language

One day the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and Abu Bakr were seated together when a person came up to Abu Bakr and began abusing and reviling him.

When the person had finished his outburst Abu Bakr, for the sake of defending himself, spoke out and in the process began to abuse the person.

The moment Abu Bakr began using foul language, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), who till then had remained a mute spectator to the incident, suddenly got up from his place in order to distance himself from him.

As he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) moved away, he commented: O' Abu Bakr! When that person was abusing you, an angel of God, was answering the person in your defense, but the moment you began abusing him, that angel left you and his place was taken over by the Shaitaan; and I am not of the persons, who would sit in a gathering in which the Shaitaan is present.(2)

4) Conduct

A person approached Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) and said: Your such and such cousin was talking about you, but whatever he spoke was nothing except for abuses and obscene language.

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1- Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. 1, pg. 194.

2- Iblees Naameh, vol. 1, pg. 73; Ihyaa al-U'loom, vol. 3, pg. 370.

Imam (peace be upon him) said to his slave-girl: Bring me some water for ablution. He then performed the ablution and stood up for prayers.

The narrator said: I thought to myself that the Imam (peace be upon him) would curse the person.

When the Imam (peace be upon him) had concluded is two-raka'h prayer, he beseeched: O' Lord! It was my right (which he had transgressed) and I have forgiven him (for his invectives and abuses). Your munificence and benefaction is much more than mine, so forgive him and do not chastise him for his conduct.

The narrator says: Seeing this compassion of the Imam (peace be upon him), I was overcome with astonishment and amazement.(۱)

۵) Ibn Muqaffa'

Ibn Muqaffa' was an erudite and intelligent person, who had translated several academic and scholarly books into Arabic. His superior acuity and excellence had caused him to become conceited such that, in public gatherings, he would end up belittling others and at times, even resort to speaking dirty and vulgar things.

One of those, who found themselves the object of his offensiveness, was Sufiyaan Ibn Mua'wiyah, who had been appointed the governor of Basrah on the part of Mansur Dawaaniqi, the second Abbasid Caliph.

Sufiyaan had a disproportionately large nose and whenever Ibn Muqaffa' would arrive before him, he would call out loudly: Salutations to both of you (meaning Sufiyaan and his large nose).

At times, he would humiliate him by making references to his mother; one day, in a gathering of people, he addressed him in a

۱- Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۲۷; Miskaah al-Anwaar.

loud voice by saying: O’ Son of a lecherous woman! In other gatherings, he would hurt .him by various forms of humiliating and abusive language

.Sufiyaan constantly awaited an opportunity to pay him back

It so happened that Abdullah Ibn Ali initiated an uprising against his nephew and the Abbasid Caliph – Mansur Dawaaniqi. Mansur dispatched Abu Muslim Khorasani to Basrah to quell the rebellion. In the battle than ensued, Abu Muslim emerged victorious and Abdullah Ibn Ali took to flight, eventually taking shelter with his .brothers Sulaiman and Isa

They interceded on his behalf before Mansur and requested that they be pardoned; Mansur accepted their intercession for Abdullah Ibn Ali and pardoned him. The uncles of Mansur returned to Basrah and approached Ibn Muqaffa’ so that he could write for .(them the official letter of pardon (for Abdullah Ibn Ali

Arrogant that he was, he wrote in the letter of pardon: In the event that Mansur Dawaaniqi deceives his uncle Abdullah Ibn Ali and troubles him, all his wealth would be considered as having become the property of the people, all his slaves would be considered free and all Muslims would be considered as free from their pledge of .allegiance to him

When the letter of pardon was brought before Mansur for signing, he was immensely .disturbed; while he refrained from signing it, he covertly ordered its writer to be killed

Sufiyaan, who had for long, been exasperated by the utterances of Ibn Muqaffa’, ,ordered him to be taken into a room. Arriving before him

he taunted: Do you recall the abuses and obscene language that you had used for my ?mother and me

He then ordered a furnace to be lit up and the thirty three year old Ibn Muqaffa’, as (per the orders of Mansur Dawaaniqi, was hurled into the flames and killed.(١

Poverty .۶۸

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

الشَّيطانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ

(Shaitaan threatens you with poverty”(٢“

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said

تحفه المومن فی الدنیا الفقر

(Poverty is a Mu'min’s gift in the world”(٣“

Short Explanation

Usually, those belonging to the lower class suffer from indigence and their numbers are large too. Since they are not contented and lack patience - hunger, thirst, lack of accommodation, inability of their children to tolerate penury and various sicknesses, brings about helplessness in their lives as a result of which they tend to extend their .hands before others for assistance

If poverty persists and a person lacks the ability to endure it, he may occasionally get .(inclined towards sins and even kufr (disbelief

A poor person must rely on God, abstain from avarice, be contented and must exhibit patience to preserve his esteem and reputation, since the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said: The best of this ummah are the indigent ones and they shall enter paradise before everyone else. Poverty is my glory;

paradise is desirous of the indigent ones and they are the kings of the inmates of paradise.(۴)

1) The Poor Pious Person

Sa'di relates:

I heard that a poor pious person, due to extreme poverty,

۱- Dunyaa-e-Jawaan, pg. ۶۴; Jawaan, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۱.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah (۲), vs. ۲۶۸.

۳- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۸۳.

۴- Ihyaa Al-Quloob, pg. ۸۹.

was in great adversity. Piece by piece he would repeatedly stitch his torn garment and for serenity of mind would say: With dry bread and a patched woolen garment I shall content myself, my heavy burden I shall endure but not the burden of someone’s obligation.

A person said to him: Why do you sit here? Do you not know that in the city there lives an honourable and magnanimous gentleman, who has resolved to help the needy ones and seeks the happiness of the pained ones? Go to him and inform him of your state for if he comes to know of your condition he shall provide you with food and new clothes and make you happy!

The pious person retorted: Keep quiet! Stitching patches repeatedly on one’s clothes and exhibiting endurance is better than approaching a rich person and seeking clothes from him. Indeed, entering paradise as a result of a neighbour’s intercession is equivalent to the tortures of the fire of hell.(۱)

۲) The Destitute and Retirement

An old blind man once came up to Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) and sought some monetary assistance from him (peace be upon him). Imam Ali (peace be upon him) turning to those around him asked: Who is this person and how is his state?

They replied: O’ Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him)! He is a Christian; and spoke in a manner which conveyed that he should not be given any assistance.

Noticing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) exclaimed: What? Till such time

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۱- Hikaayat-ha-e-Gulistan, pg. ۱۵۱.

that he had the strength to work, you extracted work from him, and now that he has turned frail, you leave him uncared-for! It appears that when he was strong, he used .to work and serve

Having said this, the Imam (peace be upon him) ordered: He should be given a (pension from the Public Treasury.(۱

The Benefits of Assisting a Poor (۳

One year, Abdullah Ibn Mubarak resolved to go to Makkah for Hajj. One day, as he was passing through a lane, he suddenly witnessed a woman, who bent down, picked !up a dead and putrid fowl from the ground and hid it under her cloak

?Abdullah said to her: O' Lady! Why have you picked up this fowl

!The woman replied: Need and adversity have compelled me to resort to such an act

When Abdullah heard this, he took the indigent woman to his house and handed her .the five hundred dinars that he had set aside for Hajj

That year, he did not go for Hajj. When the other pilgrims returned after having performed their pilgrimage, he proceeded to welcome them. As soon as they set their eyes upon him, they said to him: We have seen you performing the rites of Hajj at .A'rafaat, Mina and other places

Astonished, Abdullah approached the Imam (peace be upon him) and narrated the entire episode to him, whereupon he (peace be upon him) clarified: God had created an angel, in your likeness, to perform the pilgrimage of the House of God (in your (place).(۲

The Neighbour of Sayyid Jawaad (۴

Sayyid Jawaad A'amoli, a jurist

۱- Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Kuneem, pg. ۳۰; Tahdheeb, vol. ۶, pg. ۲۹۲.

۲- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۱۳; L'aali al-Akhbaar, pg. ۲۵۳.

:and the author of the book Miftaah al-Karaamah, narrates

One night as I was having my meals, someone knocked at the door. Opening the door, I saw it was the servant of Sayyid Bahr al-U'loom. He said to me: The dinner of Sayyid .Bahr al-U'loom is ready and he awaits you

I accompanied the servant to the house of Sayyid Bahr al-U'loom; as soon as I ?arrived in his presence, he said: Do you not fear God that you tend to be so negligent

?I said humbly: O' Teacher! What is the matter

He said: One of your brethren in faith, out of indigence, has only been able to provide his family dates, and that too on credit; seven days have passed without them having eaten anything except dates. Today he approached a grocer to procure something, but the grocer flatly refused causing him immense embarrassment. At the present moment he (Muhammad Najm A'amoli) and his family have gone to sleep without !dinner. You eat a full dinner while you have a neighbor, who is needy and deserving

I pleaded: I possessed no information whatsoever of his condition! Sayyid replied: And had you been aware of his state and yet not helped him, you would have been regarded as a Jew or even, an infidel; I am distressed as to why you do not investigate the state of your brethren in faith? My servant shall now carry these utensils of food; go with him to that person's house and tell him: "I desire that

tonight we have dinner together". Then place this bag of money (۱۲۰ riyals) under his .carpet and do not bring back the utensils

Sayyid Jawaad says: I proceeded to the person's house in the company of the servant and acted as per the teacher's instructions. The neighbour said to me: No Arab can prepare this kind of meal. Tell me! To whom does this food belong? Upon his .insistence, I confessed: It belongs to Sayyid Bahr al-U'loom

Hearing this, he was filled with great astonishment over this act of Sayyid; taking an oath, he confided: No one, save for God, has been aware of my state - not even my next-door neighbours, let alone those individuals who stay far from me.(۱)

Abandoning Poverty is also Difficult (۵!

During the time of the King Husain Kurt (۷۷۱ – ۷۳۲), there lived a person by the name of Maulana Arshadi, who was well known for his poverty and beggary; however, he possessed a beautiful voice by means of which he would move the hearts of the people. When Husain Kurt desired to send a messenger king Shujah of Shiraz, to convey his message to him, the people suggested: The speech of Maulana Arshad, .the beggar, is excellent

King Husain summoned him and said: I intend to send you upon an important mission. The only flaw that you possess is that you beg. However, I am willing to send you to .Shiraz if you promise not to bring my name into disrepute by begging there

Saying this, he gave him twenty thousand dinars; on

.Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۴۰; Kalimah-e-Tayyibah, pg. ۱۱۱ -۱

.his part, Maulana Arshadi promised that he would not beg in Shiraz

Preparations were made for the journey, the money was handed over to him and he eventually set out for Shiraz. Reaching there, he was given the reply for the message that he had from King Husain; however, when he desired to return, king Shujah and the members of his administration expressed their desire to hear some sermon in his .voice

It was decided that he would preach in the mosque after the Friday prayers. People as well as the members of the king's administration had gathered in the mosque to .hear him speak

On Friday, as he began to speak, it was not long before he had captivated everyone by his voice; observing this, his trait of beggary stimulated his greed and so, unable to restrain himself, he said: I have been placed under oath not to speak of my indigence and beggary. However, from the time I have entered your city I have not witnessed any charity from your side! Is it that all of you have taken an oath not to give me any ?alms

Hearing this, the people burst out in laughter, and then proceeded to give him so much money that he was left pleased and satisfied.(۱)

Adjudication .۶۹

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ اللَّهُ يَقْضِى بِالْحَق

"And Allah judges with the truth"(۲)

:Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said

مَنْ حَكَمَ فِى دِرْهَمَيْنِ بِغَيْرِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ فَهُوَ كَافِرٌ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ

"One who passes a judgment with respect

.Lataaif al-Tawaaif, pg. ۳۷۱ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mu'min (۴۰), vs. ۲۰ -۲

to (even) two dirhams in a manner other than what God has stipulated has exhibited 'kufr' with respect to God, the Great."(1)

Short Explanation

One of the most difficult of all worldly professions is adjudication; and if a judge tends to incline towards one of the disputing parties or issues a verdict out of ignorance or on the basis of one's whims and desires – all of which result in violation of the rights of individuals, his task becomes all the more onerous.

Judgment that is based on knowledge and not on whims and personal inclinations is very productive and the abode of such a judge is paradise.

Despite the fact that every individual, as a result of friendship and attachment, is always inclined to rule in favour of his friend rather than for one who is truly deserving, yet if there happens to arise a dispute with respect to money, rights and privileges (such as the rights and privileges of a neighbour) or family members, one must not judge falsely and wrongly in the slightest.

1) The Imam (peace be upon him) and the Jinn Judge

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) once was busy delivering a sermon from atop the pulpit in the city of Kufah when a python suddenly appeared from the side of the pulpit and slithered up the steps towards the Imam (peace be upon him).

Terrified, the people wanted to ward the reptile away from the Imam (peace be upon him) when he (peace be upon him) signaled them to stay away. As the python reached the last step of the pulpit,

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1- Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۳۶.

the people, in a state of silence and bewilderment, observed that Imam Ali (peace be upon him) had lowered himself a little while the python had raised its head and brought its mouth close to his (peace be upon him) ears. At that moment the python issued a loud sound, which was heard by most of those present; the Imam's (peace be upon him) lips then moved as if in conversation while the python listened to his .words

After a short time had passed, the python glided down the pulpit and suddenly disappeared from sight. The Imam (peace be upon him) continued his sermon and .upon completing it, descended from the pulpit

As he (peace be upon him) did so, the people crowded around him and began questioning him about the python. The Imam (peace be upon him) explained: The issue is not what you had thought it to be. He was one of the judges from amongst the Jinn and he had found himself confused in connection with a judgment; so he approached me and sought to know the verdict. I explained the judgment to him, (whereupon he prayed for me and departed.(١

The Inclination of the Judge and his Punishment (٢

:Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) has been reported to have related

In the tribe of Bani Israel there lived a scholar, who used to adjudicate amongst the people. When he was about to die he instructed his wife: When I have died, perform the ablutions, wrap me with the shroud, place me within the coffin and cover my

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.Al-Irshaad, pg. ۱۸۳ -۱

.face

When he died, his wife did as she had been instructed. However, after a short while, desiring to see her husband's face one last time, she moved aside the covering from over his face when she was shaken by the sight of a worm biting her husband's nose .and eating it

That night she witnessed her husband in her dreams and sought to know the reason .for the presence of the worm

The judge said: Once, your brother, in the company of another person, had approached me for the purpose of adjudicating a dispute that had developed between them. In my heart I felt inclined to pass the judgment in his favour. The trial nevertheless, proved that the truth was with him. However, it was that inclination to pass the judgment in his favour (before the trial) that brought upon me the (punishment by means of the worm that you witnessed on my face.(١

The 'Hereafterly' Judgment (٣

Prophet Dawood (peace be upon him) once prayed to God to make manifest for him .one of His judgments that He would issue on the Day of Judgment

God revealed to him: You have sought from Me a thing which I have not manifested .before anyone; it does not befit anyone to judge in that manner except Me

However, when Prophet Dawood (peace be upon him) once again repeated his request, Jibraeel descended and said: You have requested God for something which none of the Prophets before you has ever requested; nonetheless God has answered your prayer. In the first case

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.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١, pg. ٥٥, Anwaar-e-Nu'maaniyah, pg. ١٥ -١

that shall come up before you for judgment, the ruling of the hereafter shall become .manifest before you

The next morning as Prophet Dawood sat in his court, an old man entered bringing .along with him a youth, who held a bunch of grapes in his hand

The old man said: O' Prophet of God! This youth entered my garden, spoilt my trees .and ate my grapes without my permission

Turning to the youth, Dawood (peace be upon him) questioned: What do you have to .say? The youth confessed to having done so without the old man's permission

At that moment God revealed to Dawood (peace be upon him): If you were to pass judgment according to the ruling of the hereafter, the Bani Israel would never accept it; (for) O' Dawood! This garden belongs to the father of this youth. This old man had entered the garden, killed the youth's father and stole forty thousand dirhams that belonged to them, which he has buried in the corner of the garden. So hand a sword to the youth and ask him to behead the old man as retaliation for the murder of his father, then hand over the garden to him and ask him to dig the garden at such and .such location and extract the property which belongs to him

Prophet Dawood (peace be upon him) proceeded to execute the judgment as (commanded to him by God, the Exalted.(۱

The Jew and the Imam in the Presence of the Judge (۴

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) had been sitting in the mosque of Kufah when Abdullah

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.Hayaat al-Quloob, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۳۳ -۱

Ibn Qufl, a Jew belonging to the tribe of Tameem, passed by him (peace be upon him) .carrying a coat of mail

As soon as the Imam's (peace be upon him) eyes fell upon the coat of mail, he exclaimed: This belonged to Talhah Ibn Abdullah and had come into my possession as my share of the booty in the battle of Basrah. This is treachery (on the part of the .(Jew

The Jew agreed to accompany the Imam (peace be upon him) before the judge, who in reality had been appointed by the Imam (peace be upon him) himself. Both of them approached the judge whose name was Shuraih.(١) When the Imam (peace be upon him) put forth his claim, Shuraih said: Present witnesses to testify and corroborate your claim. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) brought his son Hasan (peace be upon him) as his witness, but Shuraih said: The testimony of one person is not sufficient (according to one narration, he refused to accept the testimony of a son in favour of (his father).(٢

The Imam (peace be upon him) then presented his slave Qanbar as his witness but .Shuraih said: I shall not issue a verdict based upon the testimony of a slave

Hearing these words, the Imam (peace be upon him) was disturbed and turning to the Jew he (peace be upon him) said: Take the coat of mail and go your way for this judge .has ruled falsely and incorrectly three times

Shuraih asked: What are

In the year ١٨ A.H. or ٢٢ A.H., at the age of forty, he was appointed judge of Kufah by -١ .the second Caliph and continued to adjudicate for ٦٠ years. He lived for ١٢٠ years

.But accepted the testimony of Qanbar -٢

?the three rulings that have been false and incorrect

The Imam (peace be upon him) replied: Woe unto you! There is no need for witness in issues pertaining to treachery and disloyalty (it is the responsibility of the owner to present witnesses to prove how he has come to become the owner of the (.possession

Secondly, I presented Hasan (peace be upon him) as my witness but you refused to accept him, whereas the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) used to pass judgments on the basis of one witness if the claimant would take an oath (testifying to his own truthfulness). Thirdly, Qanbar had testified but you said that you would not pass a ruling on the basis of a slave's testimony; however, the truth is that .if a slave is just (and upright) his testimony needs to be accepted

Woe unto you! The Imam of the Muslims, in important affairs, is trustworthy so how ?can his claim not be acceptable

The Jew who had been a witness to the entire conversation, exclaimed: Subhanallah! The Caliph of the Muslims accompanies me before a judge; the judgment is passed against him and he complies with the verdict! O' Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) you have spoken the truth. This coat of mail belongs to you; it had fallen down .from your saddlebag and I had picked it up

He then testified to the Unity of God and the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and

his holy progeny) and became a Muslim. Imam (peace be upon him) gifted him the (coat of mail and also rewarded him with nine hundred dirhams.(۱

The Eyes Turned Blind (۵

During the Caliphate of U'thman, his servant happened to slap a Bedouin as a result of which, he became blind in one eye. The Bedouin complained to U'thman, who said: I shall pay you the compensation. The Bedouin did not agree and said: I seek retaliation. U'thman doubled the compensation but the Bedouin refused and insisted .on blinding him in one eye in retaliation

U'thman sent the case to Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) so that he could pass .a judgment in the case

The Imam (peace be upon him) asked the Bedouin to take the compensation (for the injury) but he refused. The Imam (peace be upon him) doubled the compensation but again the Bedouin refused. When he (peace be upon him) saw that the Bedouin was unrelenting, he summoned the Caliph's slave and then ordered a mirror and some cotton-wool to be brought before him. Moistening the cotton, he (peace be upon him) .placed them over and around the slave's eye-lids in order to keep them open

Then, positioning the mirror under the sun such that the sunlight was reflected into the slave's open eyes, he (peace be upon him) instructed the slave: Look into the mirror. The slave was held for such time that his eye lost its vision, and in this manner the Imam (peace be upon him) extracted the retaliation

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.Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۸۶; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۴, pg. ۳۰۲ -۱

(for the eye.(١

Loans .٧٠

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِى يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضاً حَسَناً

(Who is it that will lend unto Allah a goodly loan…”(٢“

:Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has said

مَكْتُوبٌ عَلَى بَابِ الْجَنَّهِ الصَّدَقَهُ بِعَشَرَهٍ وَ الْقَرْضُ بِثَمَانِيَهَ عَشَرَ

It is written upon the door of Paradise: The reward for (giving) charity is ten times“ (and that of (extending) loans is eighteen times”(٣

Short Explanation

Providing loans to those in need is a sign of generosity. Since the problems of the underprivileged are numerous, it is essential to be regardful of and considerate .towards them

The importance of giving loans can be comprehended by the fact that lending money to a Muslim brother is regarded as more virtuous than giving him charity; thus .ensuring that the society does not get entangled in interest and usury

God increases the livelihood and enhances the moral excellences of one, who lends money to others; whereas he, who despite possessing the means to lend money to .other, refrains from doing so, shall find himself afflicted with poverty and indigence

Abu Dahdaah (١

,When the verse

مَّن ذَا الَّذِى يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَه

Who is it that will lend unto Allah a goodly loan, so that He may give it increase“ ,(manifold?”(۴

was revealed, Abu Dahdaah(۵) said: O’ Prophet of God! May I be made your ransom! ?How is it that while God is Independent and Needless, He seeks from us a loan

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) replied: It is because He desires to

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۱- Qadhawatha-e-Amirul Mu’mineen (peace be upon him), pg. ۱۰۳; Wafi, vol. ۲.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah (۲), vs. ۲۴۵.

۳- Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۵۹.

۴- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Baqarah (۲), vs. ۲۴۵.

۵- His name was Thaabit and possessed a strong faith. In the battle of Uhud, when the rumour spread that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had been martyred subsequent to which the Muslims began to flee, he shouted out: If Muhammad (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has been killed, the God of Muhammad is still alive. Fight the enemies of Islam for God is your Helper. Safinah al-Bihaar, under ‘دحدح’.

.make you enter Paradise by means of this

?Abu Dahdaah asked: If I give my God a loan, do you guarantee Paradise for me

Yes. Whoever gives God a loan, God shall recompense him in Paradise, the Holy .Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) replied

?Abu Dahdaah continued: Would my wife, Umme Dahdaah be with me in Paradise

.The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: Yes

Abu Dahdaah persisted: Would it be that my daughter too shall be with me in ?Paradise

This time, as the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) replied in the affirmative, Abu Dahdaah said to him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny): Place !your hand upon my hand to confirm what you have just stated

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) gave him his hand, .whereupon he said: I have nothing but two gardens and I lend both of them to God

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) however advised: Keep .one for yourself and lend the other

When he heard this, Abu Dahdaah said: I take you, the Prophet of God, to be my .witness that I have given the best of the two gardens as loan to God

!That garden contained six hundred date palms

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to him: God has .granted you Paradise in exchange for it

When Abu Dahdaah informed his wife of the incident, she said to

(him: May God make blessed that which you have purchased for yourself.(1

He Repaid the Loan of the One in Debt (2

One day, Imam Zainul A'abideen (peace be upon him) visited Muhammad Ibn Usaamah, who was sick. The Imam (peace be upon him) observed that he was ?weeping and so asked: How do you feel

.(Ibn Usaamah replied: I am in debt (and I am worried about its repayment

?The Imam (peace be upon him) enquired: How much is your debt

Fifteen thousand dinars, he replied, upon which the Imam (peace be upon him) (declared: I shall pay off your debt (and he paid it off).(2

The Fruits of Granting Respite to the Debtor (3

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has stated: One who desires that God shelters him on the Day when there shall be no shelter save His, should either grant respite to one, .who owes money to him or relinquish the money that is owed to him

Once on an extremely hot day, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), while sheltering himself from the sun by means of his hands said: Who is it that desires to be sheltered from the intense heat of Hell? He repeated this sentence !three times and on all the three occasions the people said: We, O' Prophet of God

He (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) then said: One, who grants respite (in the repayment of debt) to his debtor or relinquishes the money that is owned to him (by an indigent person (shall be sheltered from the severe heat of Hell).(3

The Ignorant Debtor (4

On the

.U'nwaan al-Kalaam, pg. ۱۷۵ -۱

۲- Shanidanihaa-e-Taareekh, pg. ۱۴۶; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۴, pg. ۲۳۴.

۳- I’lm-e-Akhlaaq-e-Islami, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۱۴.

night of his ascension, one of the scenes that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) witnessed was of a person, who was attempting to pick up a bundle of firewood. Despite trying, when he would be unable to do so, more firewood would be added to the bundle!

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) asked Jibraeel: Who is this person? Jibraeel replied: This person was in debt and desired to repay it but could not do so, and so he took another loan, making further additions to burden of his debts.(١)

۵) The Debtor and the Prayer for the Deceased

Mua'wiyah Ibn Wahab narrates:

I said to Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him): We have heard that once, a person from amongst the Ansaar died while in a state of debt; the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) refused to offer the prayers over him saying: "First clear off his debts and then offer prayers over him"

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: What you have heard is true and correct. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) acted in this manner in order so that the people do not take their debts lightly.

The Imam (peace be upon him) then continued: The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), Amirul Mu'mineen, Imam Hasan and Imam Husain (peace be upon them) – all of them died while in a state of debt and all their debts were then

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١- Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۵۳; L'aali al-Akhbaar.

paid off. Imam Sajjad (peace be upon him) sold the garden of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) for three hundred thousand dirhams and paid off his debts; Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) sold Amirul Mu'mineen's (peace be upon him) property for five hundred thousand dirhams and cleared the debts of his father; for three years, during the season of Hajj, Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) would call out: "Whoever has lent money to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) should (come to me so that I can clear the loan.(١

Quran .٧١

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِى لِلَّتِى هِىَ أَقْوَمُ

(Surely this Qur'an guides to that which is most upright"(٢"

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said

مَا آمَنَ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَنِ اسْتَحَلَّ مَحَارِمَهُ

One who regards as lawful that which the Qur'an considers to be unlawful, has not" (brought faith upon it"(٣

Short Explanation

A reciter of the holy Qur'an is in need of three things: A heart that is humble and submissive, a body that is free from entanglement of work and a place that is free .from presence of others

As such, whenever a reciter's heart becomes submissive to God, the accursed Satan distances himself from him; whenever he isolates himself from worldly preoccupations, his heart becomes more receptive to reciting the Qur'an; and when he selects an isolated place for reciting the Qur'an, his soul develops an intimacy with God, he begins to experience the sweetness of conversing

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.Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۷۷ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Israa (۱۷), vs. ۹ -۲

.Safinah al-Bihaar, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۱۵ -۳

with God and subsequently various miracles of the Qur'an shall become manifest for (him.(1

?Attention towards the Creation or the Creator (1

There was a person who would persistently visit the house of U'mar Ibn Khattaab in order that he might perhaps be given some material assistance. Exasperated by his constant visits, U'mar said to him: Have you emigrated to the house of God or to the house of U'mar? Go and recite the Qur'an and learn its teachings for then you shall .not possess the need to come to my house

The person went away; months passed and he never returned again. Upon making enquiries about him, U'mar was informed that he had distanced himself from the people and had now begun to devote all his time in an isolated place, in the worship of God

U'mar began to search for him, and upon finding him, said: I longed to see you (and have come to inquire after your health). Tell me, what caused you to distance yourself ?for us

The man replied: I read the Qur'an and it made me independent of U'mar and the .People of U'mar

Hearing this, U'mar asked: What was the verse that you recited that made you take ?this decision

:He replied: I was reading the Qur'an when I came across this verse

وَ فِی السَّماءِ رِزْقُکُمْ وَ ما تُوعَدُونَ

(And in the heaven is your sustenance and what you are threatened with."(2"

Reading it, I chided myself: "My sustenance is in the heavens, whereas I search for it ".on the earth; I am indeed an awful person

U'mar, greatly affected

.Tadhkerah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ۱۶ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Dhaariyaat (۵۱), vs. ۲۲ -۲

(by these words, acknowledged: You speak the truth!(1)

The Holy Prophet and the Quran (2

One of the spiritual qualities of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was his deep intimacy with the Qur'an.

Sa’d Ibn Hishaam relates:

I approached A’aishah, the wife of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and inquired about his ethics and conduct. In reply she asked: Do you recite the Qur'an?

I answered: Yes, I do, whereupon she remarked: The conduct of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was in complete accordance with the Qur'an.

His (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) voice was such that his recitation of the Qur’an was more beautiful and captivating than anyone else.

Anas Ibn Maalik, his (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) servant, says: While reciting the Qur'an, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) would stretch the tone of his voice.

Ibn Masu’d, who was one of the scribes, who would write down the verses when they were revealed, says: “One day the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to me: “Recite the Qur'an so that I may listen to it.” I recited the chapter al-Nisaa till I reached the verse 41:

فَكَيْفَ إِذا جِئْنا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَ جِئْنا بِكَ عَلى هؤُلاءِ شَهِيداً

“How will it be then, when We bring from every people a witness and bring you as a witness against these?”

As soon as I recited this verse,

Hikayaat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۲, pg. ۶۵; Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, Ibn Abil Hadeed, - ۱
.vol. ۱۹, pg. ۳۲۰

I observed that his eyes were filled with tears. He then said to me: This much is (sufficient."(١)

Ahmad Ibn Tuloon (٣

Ahmad Ibn Tuloon was one of the kings of Egypt. When he died, the ruling administration hired the services of a Qur'an-reciter for a large sum so that he should .recite the Qur'an over the grave of the king

One day it was found that the reciter had vanished and no one was aware where he had gone! After an intensive search, when he was eventually found, he was asked: .Why did you run away? All that he said was: I shall not recite the Qur'an any more

.He was told: If you feel that your salary is less, it can be doubled

.But he insisted: Even if you multiply it several times over, I shall not recite the Qur'an

When he was told: We shall not leave you till you reveal to us the reason for this behavior of yours, he revealed: Some days back, Ahmad Ibn Tuloon objected to my ?recitation and said: "Why do you recite the Qur'an over my grave

I said to him: I have been asked to recite the Qur'an for you so that you get its .rewards

He said: Not only do I not get any reward of your recitation on the contrary, with every verse that you recite, the fire, which engulfs me, is increased. I am told: "Do you hear the verses of the Quran? Why, while in the world, did

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Daastaan-hai-Az-Zindagi-e-Payambar, pg. ۶۳ as quoted from Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, -١ .vol. ۴, pg ١٢٠ and Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ٩٢, ٣٢۶ and the book 'Kuhl al-Basar, pg. ٧٩

?you not act in accordance with the Qur'an

The reciter then pleaded: Relieve me of the responsibility of reciting the Qur'an for (that impious king.(١

Five Hundred Copies of the Quran atop the Spears (۴

In the battle of Siffeen, when the situation turned for the worse for the forces of Shaam, Mua'wiyah sat in consultation with A'mr A'as to find a way to evade the imminent defeat that faced him. A'mr A'as suggested: Whoever has a Qur'an should raise it on a spear and invite the people of Iraq towards an arbitration based on the .Qur'an

:Abu Tufail, one of the companions of the Imam Ali (peace be upon him) says

The dawn after the Night of Clamour (lailatul Hareer), we observed that in front of the soldiers of Shaam there appeared things that were similar to flags. When daylight increased, we realized that they had tied Qur'ans to their spears. The great Qur'an of the mosque of Shaam was tied atop three spears with ten people holding it aloft. In each of the five sections of their army there were one hundred copies of the Qur'an - for a total of five hundred copies, held atop the spears, before the army of Iraq. In addition, all the while they were heard shouting the following slogan: By God! By God! !For your religion, this book of God shall arbitrate between you and us

When Imam Ali (peace be upon him) observed this, he sighed: O' Lord! You are aware that their aim and objective is not the Qur'an. You rule between them and

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.Riwaayat-ha Wa Hikaayat-ha, pg. ١٣١; Daastaan-ha-e-Paraakandeh, vol. ٢, pg. ۵۵ -١

.us for You are the True Ruler

This act on the part of the people of Shaam caused a split in the ranks of Imam's companions and there arose a disagreement amongst them. One group of simpleminded individuals said: It is not permissible for us to battle them anymore for they have invited us to the book of God. Another group said: This act of Mua'wiyah is .deception and we should not allow ourselves to be deceived

The consequence of this disagreement was that Mua'wiyah was able to extricate (himself from the battle and thus achieve what he had sought to achieve.(١

Napoleon (۵

Once Napoleon, while reflecting upon the Muslims, asked: Where is their main center? .He was informed that it was Egypt

When he traveled to Egypt together with a translator and entered its library; when :the translator opened the Qur'an, the following verse appeared before him

Surely this Quran guides to that which is most upright and gives good news to the (believers(٢

When the translator translated this verse for him, Napoleon stepped out of the library and passed the entire night in reflection and meditation. The next morning he visited .the library again and the translator translated other verses of the Quran for him

On the third day, when the translator had translated a portion of the Qur'an for him, Napoleon sought to know more about this book. The translator explained: They (the Muslims) believe that God has revealed the Qur'an upon the final Prophet Muhammad ;((peace be upon him and his holy progeny

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.Shaagirdaan-e-Maktab-e-Aimmah, pg. ٣٧٢ -١

إِنَّ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِى لِلَّتِى هِىَ أَقْوَمُ وَ يُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ .Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Israa (١٧), vs. ٩ -٢

.this is their book of guidance till the Day of Judgment

When he heard this, Napoleon remarked: What I have concluded from this book is that firstly, if the Muslims act upon the comprehensive and extensive teachings of this book, they shall never face humiliation and ignominy; secondly, till the time the Qur'an continues to play a role in their lives, the Muslims shall never submit before us, Westerners, except if we were to bring about a separation between them and the Qur'an.(۱)

Destiny and Decree .۷۲

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَىْ ءٍ فَقَدَّرَهُ تَقْدِيراً

"Who created everything, then ordained for it a measure"(۲)

:Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said

فِى قَضَاءِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ كُلُّ خَيْرٍ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ

"In every decree of God, there is goodness and benefit for the Mu'min"(۳)

Short Explanation

'Destiny and decree' is an issue that is related to dogmatic theology; one which is so extremely intricate, that comprehending it fully is not everybody's piece of cake.

A Mu'min ought to realize that whatever God decrees for him, irrespective of poverty and affluence, life and death, sickness and soundness of health, are for his good.

Since God is Wise and Aware of the wellbeing of His servants, whatever He decrees is in their best interests.

If one comes to acquire a firm conviction in the divine Wisdom and Prudence, sorrow would dissipate from the hearts, happiness would enter into the lives and none would

.have any anxiety with respect to one’s livelihood

Fetters upon the Feet (۱

:Muhammad Mahlabi, a minister relates

Once before I became a minister, I had embarked on a

۱- Raahnamaa-e-Sa’adat, vol. ۲, pg. ۴۷۸; Humaa-e-Sa’adat, pg. ۹۶.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Furqaan (۲۵), vs. ۲.

۳- Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۷۱, pg. ۱۵۲.

journey by ship from Basrah to Baghdad. Amongst the others in the ship was person who was very frivolous and jocose. In jest, his friends bound his feet by means of chains. However, a little later when they wanted to remove the chains, to their horror .they realized they were unable to do so

When we reached Baghdad, we called for a blacksmith in order to cut the chains, but .he refused saying: I cannot do this without the order of the judge

The inmates of the ship proceeded to approach the judge and narrating the entire episode, requested him to instruct the blacksmith to cut the chains. At that juncture a youth happened to enter the gathering; looking angrily at the person in chains, he said: Are you not such and such person, who, in Basrah had killed my brother and .escaped? It has been some time now that I have been in search of you

He then brought some people of Basrah, who testified before the judge. The judge, on the basis of the testimony of the witnesses, put the person to death as a retaliation punishment for the murder committed by him. All were filled with amazement as to (how, in fun, they had managed to chain a killer and hand him over to the authorities.(۱

Fish from the Sky (۲

Men are governed by destiny and decree; God grants to His servants what He knows :is good and beneficial for them. The late Sheikh Muhammad Husain Moulavi narrates

In the midst of World War II, I

.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۳, pg. ۱۴۶ -۱

was compelled to enter Bahrain. On a wide scale, the people of Bahrain stated: Due to the war and non-provision of supplies, for a whole week we had to remain hungry; our grains and crops had all become exhausted. All of us thronged into the mosque and Husainiyyah and began to pray. Later we observed that, by the order of God, a vapour ascended from the sea. This vapour soon transformed itself into a cloud and a strange rain, which was accompanied by fish, poured down upon us. The fish was of excellent quality, and managed to sustain us for a week till food supplies eventually (reached us!(۱

I'zraaeel, the Companion of Prophet Sulaiman (۳

One day I'zraaeel entered the assembly of Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him). In that gathering, he persistently stared at one of the associates of Sulaiman (peace be .upon him) and after a short while, departed from the gathering

After he had left, the person asked Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him): Who was ?that person

.I'zraaeel, he (peace be upon him) replied

.The man remarked: He kept looking at me as if he intended to seize my soul

?Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) inquired: What do you desire now

.The man said: Order the wind to take me to India so that I may be far away from him

Prophet Sulaiman (be upon him) commanded the wind, which took the person to .India

The next time Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) met I'zraaeel, he asked: Why ?were you staring at one of my associates

He

.Daastaan-ha-e-Shigift, pg. ٣١٣ -١

replied: I had been ordered by God to seize the soul of that person, in a short while from that time, in India! But seeing him there left me greatly astonished. However, when I went to India at the appointed(۱) hour, I found him there and seized his soul (there.(۲

The Hoopoe (۴

One day, the army of Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) which also included the .(birds, convened a regal gathering in front of him (peace be upon him

All of them, exhibiting utmost decorum and civility, stood before him (peace be upon him); each of the birds informed him (peace be upon him) of the skill and knowledge .that it possessed till it was the turn of the hoopoe

The hoopeo said: The skill that I possess is that when I am flying at great heights I am able to perceive, by my sharp and penetrative eyes, whether the water which lies in the depths of the ground gushes out of mud or from stone. It would be appropriate to grant me a rank in your army so that I can provide you information about the .presence of water when you embark upon your journeys

Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) agreed and granted him the task of pointing out the water. When the crow came to know of this, he approached Prophet Sulaiman (peace be upon him) and said: The hoopoe has not spoken the truth; if he is truly able to perceive the water within the earth, then how is it

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۱- چون به امر حق به هندوسـتان شـدم دیـدمش آنجا و جانش بسـتدم تو همه کار جهان را همچنین کن قیاس و چشم بگشا و ببین

۲- A'alam-e-Barzakh, pg. ۲۹; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۸, pg. ۲۶۸.

that he is not able to perceive the snare, which is only covered by a handful of earth, ?which traps him and lands him in a cage

The hoopoe answered: O' Prophet Sulaiman! Do not pay heed to the words of my enemy! If I speak lies, you can sever my head from my body. While I am in flight I am able to perceive the snare; however, when the (divine) destiny and decree comes into (play, a curtain clouds my intellect and ration. (۱

Faghfoor, the Chinese Emperor (۵

Having commenced his military expeditions and having brought numerous countries under his sway, Alexander then focused his sights upon China. Marching there, he laid .siege to it

The Emperor of China, in the guise of a doorkeeper, arrived in the presence of Alexander and said to him: Faghfoor, the Chinese Emperor, has sent a message that I .must convey to you in privacy

Alexander ordered everyone to leave; the gathering dispersed, leaving the two of .them in solitude

The Chinese Emperor, revealing his identity, said: I am Faghfoor, the Emperor of China. Intensely astonished, Alexander said: What gave you the confidence to dare to ?undertake such a step

Faghfoor said: I consider you to be a virtuous and rational Sultan. There never has been any enmity between us, and never have I harboured any evil thoughts about you. If you were to kill me, not a single person shall die from my army. But I have come to you personally so that I can give you whatever you desire from

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.Daastaan-ha-e-Mathnawi, vol. ۱, pg. ۴۱ -۱

.me

.Alexander said: I want you to give me the taxes of three years of China

When Faghfoor agreed, Alexander inquired: How would your state be after you have .given me the taxes

Faghfoor confessed: I shall be so weak that I would succumb to any enemy that .happens to attack me

Alexander said: If I were to be contented with the taxes of two years, how then would ?your position be

.Faghfoor replied: My condition would be slightly better than before

.What if I were to take the taxes of only one year? Alexander queried

Faghfoor said: In that case, my empire shall suffer no difficulty and I shall not be .distressed in the least

!Hearing this, Alexander said: I shall be contented with only six months of taxes

Faghfoor invited him to a banquet the following day so that he could hand over to him .the six months of taxes

The following day, entering China, Alexander was left speechless when he observed a huge army that was armed to the teeth. The entire army of Alexander found itself .ensconced within the Chinese army

;Alexander felt a little apprehensive and rued the fact that he did not come armed

Addressing Faghfoor, he said: Did you intend to play a trick on me by readying such a ?large army

Faghfoor replied: I knew that by you have been granted a great empire by means of divine decree, and that you are backed by divine succour; whoever opposes the prosperous ones is bound to taste defeat. This army is only for the

.purpose of exhibition obedience and reverence to you

Hearing this, Alexander said: Due to this understanding and reverence on your part, I gift to you the taxes of the six months that I had sought from you.(۱)

Contentment (۷۳

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ أَطْعِمُوا الْقانِعَ وَ الْمُعْتَرَّ

"And feed the poor man who is contented, and the beggar"(۲)

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

كن قانعا تكن اشكر الناس

"Be contented so that you may be the most thankful of all people"(۳)

Short Explanation

It must be realized with conviction that whatever man has been given, has been according to the will and ordainment of God.

A person having faith and conviction in the distribution of God, would never turn towards other means and as a consequence, be free of numerous inconveniences and worries.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has said: Contentment is an empire that never collapses.

This attribute elevates man to his real abode and thus, one should always be contented and pleased with what has been bestowed upon him by God and be patient with respect to that, which has not reached him.(۴)

The Conduct of Imam Sadiq (۱

Contentment is a trait, admired and praised at all times, and God loves a person who is contented. This attribute becomes more noteworthy at a time when a society .suffers from a shortage of food supplies

Mu'tab, who was responsible for caretaking of the house of Imam Sadiq (peace be :upon him) relates

Due to shortage in the market of Madinah, the prices of commodities had

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.Khazinah al-Jawaahir, pg. ۶۷۶; Zeenah al-Majaalis -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hajj (۲۲), vs. ۳۶ -۲

.Jaame' Al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۰۲ -۳

.Tadhkerah al-Haqaaiq, pg. ۳۲ -۴

shot up. The Imam (peace be upon him) asked me: How much of food supplies do we ?have in the house

:Enough to last us for several months! I replied

.Hearing this, he said: Place all of the supplies for sale in the market

?Astonished, Mu'tab said: What kind of directive is this that you give

The Imam (peace be upon him) once again repeated his words, but this time with .greater emphasis: Take all the provisions of the house and sell them in the market

Mu'tab said: When I had acted as per the Imam's (peace be upon him) instructions and sold everything in the market, he (peace be upon him) said to me: "Your duty is to procure food supplies for my house on a day to day basis just as most of the average-".class people do

The Imam (peace be upon him) added: "The food for my family should be prepared by (mixing fifty percent of barley and fifty percent of wheat"!(١

Salman (٢

:Abu Waail narrates

I, in the company of a friend, visited Salman's house. He said to us: Had the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) not prohibited exhibiting formalities for the guests, I would have taken the trouble of preparing some delicious .food for you

He then proceeded to place some bread and salt before us. Seeing the food, my friend commented: In addition to this salt, had there been some vegetable too, it would have !made a great meal

Salman pawned his pitcher and with

١- Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١, pg. ٣١.

.the money, managed to purchase some vegetables

After the meals my friend, praising God, said: All praise be to God that He made us (contented with respect to what He has given us.(١

Hearing this, Salman remarked: Had you really been contented, my pitcher would not have been pawned.(٢) (This incident has also been narrated slightly differently in that the person involved was Abu Dharr and not Salman, and the thing sought was mint, (.not vegetable

By Means of Contentment the Soul Becomes Submissive (٣

One of the signs of a contented person is abstemiousness and satisfying himself with .that which restrains and subjugates the soul

:Aswad and A'lqamah narrate

One day when we approached Imam Ali (peace be upon him), we observed that before him lay a tray containing some date fibers and upon which lay two loaves of .barley bread, the chaff of barley flour being clearly visible upon the loaves

The Imam (peace be upon him) picked up the loaves and struck them on his knees till they broke and then proceeded to eat them with some salt. Observing this, we said to Fizza, the slave-girl: Why did you not remove the chaff from the flour for the Imam ?((peace be upon him

She replied: Had Ali (peace be upon him) eaten the delicious bread, its sin would have .fallen upon my shoulders

Hearing the conversation Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) smiled and said: I .have myself instructed her not to remove the chaff

?We said: But why so, O' Ali

,He replied: In this way my soul is subjugated better

۱- اَلحَمْدُ لِلهِ الَّذي قَنَعَنا بِما رَزَقَنا

۲- Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ۳, pg. ۲۰۶.

it becomes contented, and the Mu'mins shall continue to follow me till I depart from this world. (1)

4) Your Food or Your Ruler

Sa'di, in his book Gulistaan, has recorded twenty four narratives in connection with the virtues of contentment, the last of them being the story of a devout worshipper, who after eating the food of the king, abandons his piety and contentment, and turns to greed and avarice.

Sa'di relates:

Once a pious worshipper took up dwelling in a cave where, away from the people, he engrossed himself in worship; he looked upon the kings and affluent ones in contempt, and was uninterested in and indifferent to the glitter and dazzle of the world.

One of the prosperous kings of the region sent the following message to the worshipper: I hope that your esteemed and noble self would agree to be my guest and grace us by joining us in our meals.

The worshipper was beguiled; accepting the invitation, he arrived for dinner and ate the food so as to act in accordance with the customary practice.

The following day the king, in order to thank the worshipper, set out for his cave. As soon as the worshipper's eyes fell upon the king, he stood up in respect, seated him beside him and began praising him. After a while, the king bid him goodbye and left.

Some of the worshipper's friends objected to his behaviour saying: Why did you lower yourself so much before him and, contrary to the conduct of distinguished and eminent worshippers displayed such affection for

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1- Daastaanhaai Az Zindagi-e-A'li, pg. 119; Anwaar al-Nu'maaniyyah, pg. 18.

?him

The worshipper replied: Have you not heard: “If you consume someone’s food, it becomes incumbent upon you that you become servile towards him and repay his (right!(۱

The Conduct of the Contented Ones (۵

Some people, as soon as they come across an opportunity, lose track of their own selves and endeavour to utilize it to the maximum possible manner for themselves .and their children

However the condition of Sheikh Ansaari, who became the absolute marja’ after the death of the author of the book Jawaahir, when he died was not different from the .time when he entered Najaf as a poor student from Dizfool

His house bore resemblance to those of the most indigent of people. Despite the fact that every year, more than a hundred thousand tumans (equivalent to hundreds of millions of tumans of today) of legal taxes would be handed over to him, he would content himself with the measliest of incomes such that when he died, he possessed .only ۱۷ tumans

Incidentally, he was in debt by the same amount too. His survivors did not even have the means to establish mourning ceremonies for him; it was a wealthy person who established mourning ceremonies and Qur'an-reciting gatherings for ۶ days and .nights for the Sheikh

His restraint from greed and his contentment with the very least became the reason that when his representative in Baghdad came to Najaf and requested to be granted the responsibility of arranging the dowry for his (Sheikh’s) daughter, he refused, and had his daughter married to his nephew, Sheikh Muhammad Hasan

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.Hikaayat-ha-e-Gulistaan, pg. ۱۸۴ -۱

(Ansaari, with a very trivial and ordinary dowry.(١

The Day of Judgment .٧۴

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

إِنَّما تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيامَهِ

(And you shall only be paid fully your reward on the resurrection day”(٢“

:Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said

إِنَّ الْخَلْقَ لَا مَقْصَرَ لَهُمْ عَنِ الْقِيَامَهِ

(For the people, there is no escape from Qiyaamah”(٣“

Short Explanation

After the Purgatory (Barzakh), all the people shall gather together on a Day in which they would either be rewarded or punished and it would be God, Who would be the .Judge over them

Those who had rejected and denied the truth would be led by the angels towards torture and chastisement, while those who had endured hardships in the way of .religion and refrained themselves from sins would be heralded towards Paradise

That day is the Qiyaamah in which none shall be able to object or protest; this is because in that angelic realm, all the deeds committed in the world would be found recorded in a manner such that not a single deed would be concealed or hidden for .anyone to register a protest

The Plaintiff of the Day of Judgment (١

Ja’far Tayyaar, the brother of Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him), together with eighty two other Muslims, emigrated to Ethiopia in the fifth year after the proclamation of the Prophethood by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy

progeny) so that not only would they remain safe from the persecutions of the .polytheists, but they would also be able to propagate Islam there

These emigrants stayed there for around twelve years, returning to Medinah in the

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.Seemaa-e-Farzaanigaan, pg. ۴۵۷ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Aale I'mraan (۳), vs. ۱۸۵ -۲

.Nahjul Balaghah (Faidh), pg. ۴۸۸ -۳

year ۷ A.H., that is, around the time when the Muslims had emerged victorious in the .battle of Khaibar

It has been reported that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) ?asked Ja'far: During your stay in Ethiopia, what strange thing did you witness there

He replied: I witnessed a black Ethiopian woman passing by, carrying a large basket on her head. An eve-teaser elbowed her causing her to fall down, as a result of which the basket on her head fell to the ground as well. The woman turned to the person and said: "Woe unto you from the Judge of the Day of Judgment, Who shall grant ".justice to the oppressed from the oppressor

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) hearing this, was also (overcome with great astonishment over this startling speech of the woman.(۱

The Most Wicked of the People on the Day of Judgment (۲

Abdullah Ibn Ubayy Salool (one of the most obstinate hypocrites of early Islam and a staunch enemy of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) sought .permission to arrive in his (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) presence

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) came to realize who had come, he expressed his displeasure at the thought of having to meet him; .however, he ordered: Allow him to enter

When he had entered, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) seated him and spoke to him in a warm and friendly

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.Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۲, pg. ۱۲; Aa'laam al-Waraa, pg. ۲۱ -۱

manner. When Abdullah had departed, A'aishah queried: O' Prophet of God! You had not spoken well of him before his entry, however, after he had entered, you spoke to .him in a very cordial manner

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) stated: O' A'aishah! The most iniquitous of all people on the Day of Judgment shall be one, whom the people (respect in order that they may remain safe from his evils.(١

Fear of the Day of Judgment (٣

Whenever the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) would leave for a battle, he would make it a point to establish a bond of brotherhood between two of his companions; he did so between Sa'eed Ibn A'bd al-Rahmaan and Tha'labah .Ansaari before he left for the battle of Tabuk

Sa'eed accompanied the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) for .jihad while Tha'labah stayed back and was responsible for looking after his family

One day when Tha'labah went to Sa'eed's house for arranging food provisions for his family, the Satan tempted him to look at Sa'eed's wife, and before long, he was soon overcome with lust. Approaching near, he placed his hand upon her, at which point she cried out: Is it appropriate that while your brother has gone on jihad, you intend to ?violate the chastity of his wife

These words affected him so drastically that he set out into the wilderness and upon reaching the base of a mountain, fell onto the ground and began weeping day and

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Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Koneem, pg. ١٢٩; Mustadrak al-Wasaail, vol. ٢, pg. -١ .٩٢

.night – remorseful of his evil action

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and his companions returned from battle, all the people from the city thronged to welcome their brothers, except Tha'labah. Sa’eed went to his house and questioned his wife about Tha'labah, .whereupon she informed him of what had transpired

Sa’eed came out of his house and began to search for Tha'labah till he eventually found him seated near a stone and repentantly slapping his head and wailing out .loudly: Woe from the shame and humiliation of the Day of Judgment

Sa’eed took him in his arms, consoled him and sought to take him to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) to find out a way for his forgiveness, but Tha'labah said: Tie my hands and place a rope around my neck in an appearance .similar to that of slaves who have attempted to run away

When Sa'eed brought him before the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to him: You have indeed committed a grave offence. Go away from me, seek forgiveness from God and await .His orders

After a period of time, when the verse of Forgiveness and Repentance(١) was revealed at the time of the A'sr prayers, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) sent Ali (peace be upon him) and Salman to bring Tha'labah.

They set out into the desert

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Aale I’mraan (٣), vs.١٣۵ –١

in search of him, eventually finding him conversing with his Lord and seeking His forgiveness. Witnessing his state, Amirul Mu'mineen's (peace be upon him) eyes filled up with tears and he (peace be upon him) gave him the good news that God had !forgiven him

It was night when they brought him to Medinah; the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was reciting the chapter al-Takaathur in the Maghribain prayers. No sooner did Tha'labah hear the first verse(١), he gave out a cry; hearing the second verse(٢), he shrieked loudly and when he heard the third verse(٣), he fell .down unconscious; after the prayers, people found that he had died

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and the companions began to weep. He (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) instructed that Tha'labah be given the ablutions and prayers offered over him. As he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) accompanied Tha'labah's funeral procession, he was seen to be walking on the tips of his toes. When the people sought to know the reason for it, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said: The angels who had come to participate in his prayers and join his funeral procession were so great in number that (I had to walk upon my toes!(۴

Imam al-Mujtaba (۴

When Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) was about to die, those around him observed that he (peace be upon him) was weeping and

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١- أَلْهاكُمُ التَّكاثُرُ
٢- حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقابِرَ
٣- كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ
۴- Khazinah al-Jawaahir, pg. ٣١۵; Raudhah al-Anwaar of Sabzwaari.

so they asked: O' Son of the Prophet of God! Despite your relationship with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and the rank and status that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) has mentioned about you do you still weep? Twenty times you have performed Hajj on foot; on three occasions ?you have given one half of all your wealth in the way of God, and yet you weep

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: I weep due to fear of Qiyaamah and separation (from my friends.(١

Taubah Ibn Summah (۵

There lived a person by the name of Taubah Ibn Summah, who spent most of the .time of his day and night in vigilance and self-examination of his soul

One day he sat to count the number of days he had lived and calculated the figure to be ۲۱,۵۰۰. When the enormity of the figure struck him, he said: Woe unto me! Would I be meeting the Exalted God on the Day of Judgment with this figure? If I were to have committed even one sin per day, I would have ۲۱,۵۰۰ sins; what then would be my .state? Having said this, he fell down unconscious

When the people approached him, they found that he had died in that state of unconsciousness; it was only the thought and fear of the reckoning of the Day of (Judgment that brought about his death.(۲

Working .۷۵

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ أَنْ لَيْسَ لِلْإِنْسانِ إِلاَّ ما سَعى

And"

۱- Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۴, pg. ۲۰۸.

۲- Sarmaayeh-e-Sa’adat, pg. ۳۹.

(that man shall have nothing but what he strives for”(١

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ حِرْفَةٌ يَعِيشُ بِدِينِهِ

If a Mu'min does not possess a profession, he shall endeavour to earn his livelihood“ (by using his religion (which is immensely reprehensible)”(٢

Short Explanation

The best food for oneself and one’s family is that which has been procured by one’s .own effort, legitimately

Lawful food is a consequence of lawful work and earnings, and one who works in this manner and strives for the sake of himself and his family is akin to a soldier striving in .the way of God

Those who have habituated themselves to laziness and lethargy, face great difficulties with respect to their livelihoods such that they are unable to procure earnings sufficient to fulfill even their basic necessities. They thus, pollute themselves .by engaging in illegal and unlawful professions

One who is incapable in earning his basic needs of this world, would also be impotent .in earning for his hereafter

The Endowment Letter (١

During his caliphate Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) once said: All throughout Iraq my subjects are in ease and comfort – they drink sweet water and eat bread .made of wheat

The Imam (peace be upon him) had freed one of his slaves, by the name of Abu Naizar, upon the condition that he should work for him (peace be upon him) in his plantation for five years. Later on, the Imam (peace be upon him) granted him the task of supervising his fields

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۱- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Najm (۵۳), vs. ۳۹.

۲- Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۱۰۳, pg. ۹.

.’and springs, one of which came to be popularly known as ‘river of Abu Naizar

:He relates

One day the Imam (peace be upon him) came to inspect his field and dismounting ?from his horse inquired: Do you have some food with you

I replied: Yes, although I fear it does not match up to your standards – I have gourd .with some fat oil

.The Imam (peace be upon him) said: Bring it

When I had brought the food, he washed his hands and then proceeded to eat it. After he had finished, he washed his hands again, drank some water and then said: Bring .me the pickaxe

When I brought it, he took it from me, entered into a dry well and began to dig so hard .that he was eventually overcome with exhaustion and fatigue

To do away his exhaustion he came out of the well; perspiration dripping from his holy .forehead which he would clear by means of his fingers

A little later he once again entered the well, raising a din as he worked hard in it. While he (peace be upon him) was digging, all of a sudden, a fountain of water gushed out like the neck of a camel. The Imam (peace be upon him) immediately emerged from within the well and still perspiring, kept saying: This is charity! This is charity. Bring me .some ink and paper

I hurriedly brought some ink and paper for the Imam (peace be upon him), who wrote the following bequest: This is an

endowment from the servant of God, Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) given to the needy ones of Medinah as charity – a charity that cannot be sold, gifted or transferred till for so long as God is the owner of the heavens and the earth, except if Hasan and Husain (peace be upon them) fall in need of it for then this well would become their property.(1)

U'mar Ibn Muslim (2

One day Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) inquired about one of his companions by the name of U'mar Ibn Muslim, whereupon a person informed him: He has confined himself to acts of worship and has totally abandoned his trade.

Hearing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) said: Woe unto him! Does he not know that the prayers of one, who abandons his work and profession are not answered?

Continuing, the Imam (peace be upon him) related:

When the second and third verses of the chapter al-Talaaq were revealed, stating: "And whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allah, He will make for him an outlet, And give him sustenance from whence he thinks not; and whoever trusts in Allah, He is sufficient for him"(2), some of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) enclosed themselves in their houses, abandoned their work and confined themselves in acts of worship, saying: God is sufficient for us to provide us sustenance.

When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was informed of this, he asked them: What

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١- Islam Wa Kaar Wa Kushish, pg. ٢۴.

٢- مَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجاً وَ يَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لا يَحْتَسِبُ وَ مَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

?has caused you to adopt this attitude

They replied: According to the second and third verses of the chapter al-Talaaq, God has taken upon Himself to provide us our sustenance and hence we have restricted !our activities to acts of His worship

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) rebuked them saying: The prayers of one, who abandons his work and busies himself in worship, are not answered. It is incumbent upon you to work and earn your sustenance.(١)

To Work is Better than Consuming Charity (٣

Once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was informed that a person from Madinah had become afflicted with abject poverty. He (peace be upon !him and his holy progeny) said: Bring him to me

When some people brought the person before him, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to him: Bring whatever you possess in your house; do not regard .anything as insignificant

The person went home and returned with a bowl and sackcloth. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) placed them for auction, and they were .eventually purchased by a person for two dirhams

Handing over the money to the poor Muslim, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) advised: Utilize one dirham to buy some food for your family .and use the other dirham to purchase an axe for yourself

The man did as instructed; purchasing an axe he approached the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), who then said

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.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ٩, pg. ٧٣ -١

to him: Go into the desert and collect firewood; collect every piece of wood that you find and do not consider anything to be trivial and insignificant, and then proceed to .sell them

He went away and begun to act as per the instructions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny). Fifteen days later his financial state had improved; he came to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) who said to him: It is better for you that you work and earn your wage rather than take charity and enter the plains of Qiyaamah on the Day of Judgment with the ugly sign of charity (manifesting upon your face.(١

Putting the Soul to Labour (۴

:Fadhl Ibn Abi Qarrah relates

Once when we approached Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), we found him hard at work in his field. Observing this, we said to him (peace be upon him): May we be made .your ransom! Either permit us to do the work or let your servants do it

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: No. Let me work. I desire that I meet God after .having exerted myself and worked by my own hands in seeking lawful sustenance

He (peace be upon him) then added: Even Ali (peace be upon him) used to (inconvenience himself for the purpose of procuring lawful income.(٢

Ya'qub Ibn Laith Saffaar (۵

All the rulers of the Saffaar dynasty had been Shiites and their rule had extended for a ,period of fifty six years. They were seven in number

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.Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ٣, pg. ۵٧; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ١٠٣, pg. ١٠ -١

.Shanidani-ha-e-Taareekh, pg. ۴٧; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ٣, pg. ١۴٧ -٢

.(.the first of them being Ya'qub Ibn Laith Saffaar (d. ۲۶۵ A.H

Ya'qub originally was a coppersmith by profession and it is for this reason that he came to be known as Saffaar. Slowly, he set about gathering an army for himself and began killing the anti-religious Khawaarij. His activities witnessed an upturn till he .eventually occupied Khorasan, Seestaan and several other cities

It has been recorded that he was an extremely gifted administrator such that few have been known to possess the management and systematization skills that he .possessed. The obedience of his soldiers to his orders was unparalled

When Ya'qub would order his army to proceed for battle, the soldiers would ready themselves in such a manner that they would collect their mounts while they were .grazing, mount them and set out towards their target

It was observed that once, a person's horse was chewing some hay; the person pulled it out of the animal's mouth in order that there be no delay, even in the measure of chewing of the grass by the animal, in obeying the orders of the Ya'qub. Addressing the horse, he said: King Ya'qub has prohibited the animals from eating !their food

Another person was observed to be naked under his battle-dress. When questioned, he replied: I was engaged in performing the ablution of janaabat when the king's announcer announced: "Get ready for battle". Not wanting to delay myself in complying with the king's order, I did not wear my clothes and satisfied myself with

(wearing only the battle-dress!(1)

76. Begging

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

وَ أَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلا تَنْهَرْ

"And as for him, who asks, do not chide (him)"(2)

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said:

لو لا ان السائل يكذب ما قدس من رده

"If it were not for the telling of lies by the beggars, one who rebuffed them, would not be consecrated"(3)

Short Explanation

Some people have transformed themselves into beggars, adopting begging as their profession; despite possessing the means, they extend their hands before others, requesting help and assistance. These are those who, on the Day of Judgment, shall meet God in a state that their faces shall be devoid of flesh.

A Mu'min is one, who does not bark like a dog, does not possess avarice, and whose self-esteem prevents him from stretching out his hands before every Tom, Dick and Harry. How then is it possible for the face, which falls into prostration for God and the hands that rise up towards the heavens in the qunoot, to humiliate and debase themselves before others?

Of course, the Mu'mins ought to identify those that are needy and while preserving their respect and esteem, assist them in order that they do not stretch out their hands for begging.

1) Imam Sadiq and the Beggar

:Masma' Ibn A'bd al-Malik relates

We were in the company of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) at Mina (where the Pilgrims halt during Hajj) and engaged in eating grapes that lay before us in a vessel when a beggar approached us and asked the Imam (peace be upon

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.Tatimmah al-Muntaha, pg. ۲۶۲ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Dhuha (۹۳), vs. ۱۰ -۲

Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۹۸ -۳

.him) for some help

The Imam (peace be upon him) ordered a bunch of grapes to be given to him. When the grapes were offered to him, the beggar refused saying: I am not in need of this. I .require dirhams

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: May God increase your sustenance. The beggar departed but returned shortly and said: Give me that bunch of grapes. The Imam (peace be upon him) said: May God increase your livelihood, but this time did not give .him any grapes

Not very long afterwards, another beggar arrived and asked him for something to be given to him. The Imam (peace be upon him) picked up three grapes with his own hands and handed them to him. The beggar took the grapes and said: Praise be to the .God of the Worlds, Who provided me these grapes

.Hearing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) said to him: Wait

Then filling his two palms with grapes, he handed them to the beggar. The beggar .took the grapes and again praised God

When the Imam (peace be upon him) heard this, he turned to his slave and inquired: How much money do you have with you? The slave replied: Twenty dirhams. The Imam (peace be upon him) handed them over to the beggar. The beggar once again praised God, saying: O' Lord! Praise is for You, this money is from You and You do not .have any partner

For the third time, the Imam (peace be upon him) asked

him to wait and this time, removing his garment, handed it to him. The beggar took the garment and, wearing it, said: Praise be to the God, who has dressed and covered me. Then, addressing the Imam (peace be upon him), he said: O' Aba A'bdillah! May !God grant you a goodly recompense

Having prayed for him (peace be upon him) the beggar began to move away; .however, this time the Imam (peace be upon him) did not stop him

We figured that had the person not prayed for the Imam (peace be upon him) and had continued to only praise God, the Imam (peace be upon him) would have continued to (bestow him with gifts.(١

Abbas Dous (٢

Once A'bbas Daus was in the public bath when a person approached him and said: I intend to start begging and hence I desire to remain with you in order to acquire its !skills from you

A'bbas said: It is not necessary for you remain with me. Just keep in mind that the art of begging has three principles and if you utilize these three principles, you would be a perfect beggar: Firstly, you must beg, irrespective of the place; secondly, you must beg, irrespective of the person; and thirdly, you must accept irrespective of whatever .is given to you. The person kissed the hand of A'bbas and left

One day coincidentally, A'bbas had gone to the public bath in order to cleanse himself and rid his body of its excess hair. There he was approached

.Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Koneem, pg. ١٢٣; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۴٧, pg. ۴٢ -١

by that person, who said to him: Give me something. A'bbas said: Are you begging in the public bath? The person said: (I beg) irrespective the place. A'bbas said: (You beg) even from A'bbas? The person said: (I beg), irrespective of the person. Finally A'bbas said: Even if it be the excess hair of the body? The person replied: (I take) irrespective of whatever is given.

Hearing this, A'bbas exclaimed: Bravo! You have learnt the principles of begging excellently.(١)

٣) The Limits of the Impoverished Ones

Abu Baseer states: I informed Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him): One of your Shiites, a pious person by the name of U'mar, due to his destitution, approached Isa Ibn Aa'yan and sought some help from him. However, Isa said: 'I have some zakaat in my possession but I shall not give it to you for I have observed that you have purchased meat and dates, which indicates that you are not indigent.

U'mar said: In one business transaction my share of profit turned out to be one dirham; I spent one-third of it to purchase some meat, spent another one-third for purchasing some dates and utilized the remaining in fulfilling other requirements of the house.

The Imam (peace be upon him) was visibly disturbed upon hearing this and placing his hand upon his forehead (as a sign of distress and disconcertedness) said: God has stipulated for the impoverished, a share in the wealth of the affluent ones in a measure that would enable them to lead their lives in a good manner; had that

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١ - Daus is a tribe from Yemen and this A'bbas Daus was proverbial and beguiling in the art of begging.

.measure not been sufficient, He would have stipulated an even greater share

Therefore, the poor ones ought to be given in the measure such that they are able to provide for themselves with respect to food, clothing, marriage, charity and Hajj; strictness and stringency ought not to be exhibited with respect to them, especially (for the likes of U'mar, who is of the pious ones.(۱

The Respectable Destitute (۴

Once Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) sent nine hundred kilograms of dates from his own farm situated in Yanba' (in the outskirts of Medinah) for one person. This person was of those who, though in need of financial help never permitted himself to .ask for it, neither from him (peace be upon him) nor from others

A person commented to the Imam (peace be upon him): By God! That person had never sought any help from you that you gave him this gift. It would have been quite !sufficient had you given him just one kilogram

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: May God never increase the likes of you among the people! I exhibit munificence while you exhibit parsimony? If I do not give him that which he expects from me except after he has asked me for it, I would not have been doing him any favour. This is because I would then have compelled the face, which .prostrates on the ground before God and worships Him, to plead before me

And one who acts thus with his brother Muslim, despite knowing that he

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Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. ۱, pg. ۱۴۲; Sharh Man Laa Yahdhuruhu al-Faqeeh, the Book -۱ .of Zakaat, pg. ۳۶

is deserving of help, has not spoken the truth to God. This is because when he prays :for his brother Muslim saying

اللهم اغفر للمؤمنين و المؤمنات

O' Lord! Forgive the male and female believers!" he seeks forgiveness for his brother" Muslim, he is effectively seeking Paradise for him. But at the same time when it comes !to giving to him the temporal provisions of this world he exhibits stinginess

(Thus it is inappropriate for him to speak out something which he does not practice.(١

The Young Beggar (۵

Once a young man and his wife were having their meals which consisted of roasted chicken, when a beggar came up to the door and asked for some help. The young man came out and with great harshness, drove him away from his house. The needy .one having faced the outburst, turned and walked away

It so happened that after a period of time this young man lost all his wealth and became a pauper. He also divorced his wife, who subsequently got married to another .person

As fate would have it, one day this lady and her second husband were having their food – roasted chicken – when suddenly a beggar came up to the door and sought help. The man said to his wife: Arise and hand this chicken to the beggar. The lady picked up the food and approached the beggar, but when her eyes fell upon him, she recognized him to be her erstwhile husband. Handing him the chicken, she

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.Islam Wa Mustamandaan, pg. ٢۵١; Furu' al-Kafi, (Old Publication), pg. ١۶٧ -١

.returned; her eyes swimming in tears

When the husband noticed this, he asked her the reason for her weeping. She replied: This beggar was my former husband. She then went on to narrate the entire incident of her former husband and the beggar, and how he had scolded him and driven him .away

When the lady completed her narrative, her second husband said: O’ Wife! By God! I (was that beggar!(١

Helping Others .٧٧

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَن يَنقَضَّ فَأَقَامَهُ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا

Then they found in it a wall which was on the point of falling, so he put it into a right“ (state”(٢

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

مَن قَضَى لِاَ خِيْهِ الْمُؤْمِن حاَجَةً فَكَانَّما عَبدَ اللهَ دَهْرَهً

One who fulfils the desire of his brother Mu’min, would be as if he has worshipped“ (God for his entire life”(٣

Short Explanation

God has created the people in a manner that they remain associated and connected to one another so that, by this way, they strive to fulfill each other’s needs and .requirements

At times a Mu'min falls in need of money for his house rent or treatment of disease or requires a recommendation in order to attain someone’s assistance but some people, despite possessing the means and the ability, due to some imaginary or apparent

benefits, hesitate to offer their help. In such cases, God gets them entangled with their enemies (in this world) while, on the Day of Judgment, they shall be

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۱- Dunyaa-e-Jawaan, pg. ۳۳۱; Aathaar al-Saadiqeen, vol. ۸, pg. ۱۳۹.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Kahf (۱۸), vs. ۷۷.

۳- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۳۰.

.made to suffer punishment and chastisement

The recommendations and rewards related to fulfilling the needs of the people have been emphasized in such great measure that one is left amazed that despite this great path available for procuring the success in the hereafter, how very few are .those who make the best of it

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has stated: Fulfilling a need of a Mu'min brother is better than liberating a thousand slaves and giving a thousand horses (for jihad) in the .path of God

Despite all the emphasis, it is the whisperings (of the Shaitaan) and attachment to the world, which prevent man from helping out the others.(١)

Nine Thousand Years (١

:Maimoon Ibn Mahraan narrated

I was sitting beside Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) when a man came up to him and said: O' Son of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny)! I owe a person a debt but do not possess any money to repay it and so he intends to hurl me .into prison

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: Presently I do not possess any money by which I can pay off your debt. The man pleaded: Then do something so that he does not put .me into prison

The Imam (peace be upon him) had been in a state of itekaaf, but he put on his shoes and intended to move out of the mosque whereupon I said to him: O' Son of the Prophet of God! Have you forgotten that you are

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.Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ١٢١ -١

?(in a state of itekaaf (and you must not go out of the mosque

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: No! I have not forgotten. However I have heard from my father that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) used to say: "One, who strives to fulfill a desire of his Muslim brother is like one who has spent nine thousand years, fasting during the days and worshipping during the (nights.(١

Breaking the Circumambulation (٢

:Aabaan Ibn Taghlib narrates

I was engaged in the circumambulation of the Ka'bah in the company of Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) when one of my friends asked me to move to a side and listen to his request. Not wanting to leave the company of the Imam (peace be upon him), I .ignored him and disregarded his request

In the next round around the Ka'bah that person signaled me to come towards him; this time however the Imam (peace be upon him) happened to see him and so asked me: O' Aabaan! Does he have some work with you? I replied in the affirmative, whereupon the Imam (peace be upon him) inquired: Who is he? I said: One of my friends. The Imam (peace be upon him) further inquired: Is he also a Mu'min and a Shiite? I replied: Yes. Hearing this, the Imam (peace be upon him) instructed: Go to .him and fulfill his desire

Should I discontinue my circumambulation? I queried. He (peace be upon him) replied: Yes. I asked: Is it permissible

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.Riwaayat-ha Wa Hikaayat-ha, pg. ١٢٢; Daastaan-ha-e-Paraakandeh, vol. ٢, pg. ١٥٢ -١

to discontinue even the obligatory circumambulations and leave them midway if it is for the purpose of fulfilling the needs of a Mu'min? He (peace be upon him) replied: .Yes

I halted my circumambulation and proceeded towards the man. After assisting the person, I returned to the Imam (peace be upon him) and requested him to inform me (of the rights of a Mu'min upon another Mu'min...(۱)

Concern towards the Needy (۳

:Waqidi relates

It so happened that once I was faced with abject poverty and was compelled to seek a loan from an A’lawi(۲) friend of mine, especially since the month of Ramadhan was near at hand. I wrote him a letter and he reciprocated by sending me a sac containing .one thousand dirhams

Soon after, I received a letter from another friend requesting me to assist him with a loan. I sent the sac containing the thousand dirhams, which I had taken as loan, to him .so that so that he could be relieved of his problem

It was not long before both, the A’lawi friend as well as one to whom I had sent the money, arrived at my place. The A’lawi enquired: What did you do with the money that I sent to you? I said: I have utilized it in a good deed. Hearing this he laughed and, placing that sac of money before me, said: Having sent you the money,I had no more money left. With the month of Ramadhan approaching, I decided to seek some money from this friend, only to receive

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۱- Shanidani-ha-e-Taareekh, pg. ۶۹; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ۳, pg. ۳۵۶.
۲- One, who is from the descendants of Imam A'li (peace be upon him) (Translator’s (comments

.the sac with my own seal upon it, which I had sent for you

As all of us are in need, we have come here so that we distribute the money amongst .ourselves till such time that God provides an opening for us

.We divided the money amongst ourselves and parted from each other

However within the first few days of the month of Ramadhan all the money was exhausted. One day Yahya Ibn Khaalid summoned me; when I presented myself .before him, he said: I have dreamt that you are faced with poverty. Tell me the truth

When I narrated to him the past incidents, he was greatly astonished, and subsequently ordered thirty thousand dirhams to be given to me and ten thousand .dirhams to be given to each of the other two friends

It was because of our concern and care towards fulfilling the needs of our brethren (that this windfall came our way.(١

Extinguishing the Lamp (۴

:Haarith says

One night I was engaged in conversation with Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him). .As we talked, I said to him (peace be upon him): I am in need of something

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: O' Haarith! Do you regard me worthy of ?informing me of your need

Of course O' Ali: I said

When he heard this, the Imam (peace be upon him) suddenly rose from his place and extinguished the lamp; then, with great affection and compassion he sat down beside me and said: Do you know why I have extinguished the lamp? I have done this

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ٢, pg. ۴٣٨; Farajun Ba'd al-Shiddah, pg. ١٨۶ -١

so that you can speak out all that is there in your heart without any kind of formality, .and that I do not see the embarrassment upon your face

Now speak out all that you desire to state for I have heard the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) say: "When the needs of a person are placed in the heart of another, they becomes a divine trust, which must be concealed from others; .the one who conceals them, shall be given the rewards of worship

But if they happen to be divulged, it befits all those who become aware of them to (endeavour to fulfill them for the needy one."(۱

Lettuce (۵

:One of the scholars of Najaf relates

One day, at a greengrocer's shop, I witnessed the late Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Aaqa Qaadhi(۲) (d. ۱۳۶۶ A.H.) busy selecting lettuces. However, contrary to the normal practice, I observed him selecting those that had become withered and those that .possessed large and coarse leaves

He selected the lettuces and handed them to the owner of the shop, who weighed it for him after which, tucking them under his cloak, he moved out of the shop. I hastened after him and enquired: Sir, why did you select the lettuces that were ?inferior and undesirable

He replied: This greengrocer is a poor person and I occasionally help him; however, I do not wish to give him something gratuitously so that firstly, his esteem and honour ,does not erode and secondly, he does not, God forbid

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.Baa Mardum In Guneh Barkhord Koneem, pg. ۹۵; Wafi, vol. ۶, pg. ۵۹ -۱

He was the teacher of irfaan (mysticism) for Allamah Tabatabai, Ayatullah Behjat, -۲ Ayatullah Sayyid A'bd al-Kareem Kashmiri and numerous others, and truly, the like of .him has rarely been seen in the past sixty years

.habituate himself to taking things free of charge and thus become lax in his work

I am aware that no one shall purchase these lettuces from him and he shall have to dump them outside when he closes his shop and so, in order to prevent him from .suffering losses, I purchased them from him

As for me, it does not make a difference if I eat lettuces that delicate and tender or (those that are large and coarse!(١

Malice .٧٨

point

:Allah, the Wise, has said

وَ نَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍ ّ

(And We will remove whatever of ill-feeling is in their breasts"(٢"

:The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said

المومن ليس بحقود

(A Mu'min is never malicious"(٣"

Short Explanation

Malice is housed within the soul. A malicious person, because of the fact that he cannot prevail over his opponent or has been insulted, abused, suffered false allegations or has been deprived of rank or riches, continues to harbour enmity towards a person and awaits for an opportune and sensitive moment when he can .overcome and destroy him

A malicious person, upon witnessing the person whom he resents, is always disturbed; the flames of malice and acrimony, if not checked, would only intensify to an extent that when the faculty of reason and intellect gets overpowered by the faculty of anger, man, God forbid, perpetrates an act, repentance over which does

.not yield any benefit

A Mu'min is never malicious and vindictive, either entrusting the evils committed by a person to God, or pardoning and disregarding

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۱- Seema-e-Farzaanegaan, pg. ۳۴۹; Mehr-e-Taabaan, pg. ۲۰.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Aa'raaf (۷), vs. ۴۳.

۳- Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۱, pg. ۳۱۱.

them – always seeking assistance from the faculty of reason so as to prevent himself from burning in the flames of malice and rancour.(١)

1) Maliciousness of Waleed

A'qabah, the father of Waleed (the governor of Kufah), had once spat upon the face of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) in Mecca. He had joined the ranks of the infidels in the battle of Badr. When the infidels were defeated, Aqabah was taken captive and brought before the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), who ordered Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) to put him to death.

Consequently, his son Waleed, who had been appointed the governor of Kufah during the caliphate of U'thman, always harboured malice towards Amirul Mu'mineen (peace be upon him) and continued to abuse him (peace be upon him) throughout his life.

When Waleed fell ill, Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) paid him a visit. He opened his eyes and witnessing Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) said: I am repentant of all my past deeds and seek God's forgiveness for them, except the abuses which I hurled at your father, for which I am not repentant.

The Imam (peace be upon him) said: My father had killed your father and had punished you (for consuming wine) and this is the reason of your animosity towards him (and it is this malice that has provoked you to abuse him).(٢)

2) Ibn Sallaar

In the sixth century a person by the name of Ibn Sallaar, one of the officers

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١- Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. ۶۴.

٢- Kaifer-e-Kirdaar, vol. ١, pg. ١٠٩.

of the Egyptian army, rose to the rank of minister and ruled over the people with .comprehensive power and authority

On the one hand he was courageous, intelligent and active, while on the other hand self-centered and malicious and hence, while he was a minister, he not only served .the people but also committed great and numerous acts of oppression

During the time when he was a soldier in the army, he was sentenced to pay certain damages and compensation. He appealed to Abi al-Karam, the clerk of the treasury, for justice, but Abi al-Karam refused to consider his explanations and upheld the sentence saying: Your words do not enter into my ears. Ibn Sallaar was infuriated and continued to harbour malice towards him. When he became the minister and an opportunity presented itself for revenge, he had Abi al-Karam arrested and ordered a .long nail to be hammered into one of his ear till it emerged from the other one

While the nail was being hammered, whenever Abi al-Karam would shriek out in pain, !Ibn Sallaar would say: Now my words have entered into your ears

Later, upon Ibn Sallaar's orders, the lifeless body of Abi al-Karam with the hammered nail was hung up on the gallows.(١)

Rancour Transforms into Friendship (٣

Shaibah's father was called U'thman, who, along with the other disbelievers, was killed in the battle of Uhud. Since the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had killed his father and eight persons from his family, Shaibah held an intense grudge against

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Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ١, pg. ١۶٣; Lughat Naameh-e-Dehkhuda, Abu Sa'd, -١ .pg. ٣٢٠

.him

He himself said: There was none towards whom I harboured more animosity than Muhammad, for he had killed eight persons from my family, all of whom possessed the competence and ability to be leaders and commanders. I had always nurtured the idea of killing him but, after the conquest of Mecca, I lost hope of achieving my goal for I used to think: How would it be possible for me to achieve my objective when all .the Arabs had flocked into his religion

However when the people of Hawaazan united in their opposition towards him (peace be upon him) and declared their intention to fight him (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), the desire of mine was to a certain extent rekindled within my heart. But the problem that lay before me was that he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) !was surrounded by ten thousand soldiers

However when the Muslim forces fled in their first encounter with the forces of Hawaazan, I said to myself: This is the opportunity to achieve my objective and take .(revenge for the killings (of the family members

I attacked the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) from the right flank but found A'bbas, his uncle, guarding him. Coming up from the left flank, I realized that Abu Sufiyaan Ibn Haarith, (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was vigilant of him and said to myself: This person guarding Muhammad is also a brave .person

I then came

up from behind up and reached so close that my sword was about to reach him when suddenly, a veil of fire appeared as a barrier between him and me leaving my eyes dazzled with its intensity. Covering my face with my hands I retreated, realizing that .he was under God's protection

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) became aware of me and said: Shaibah come near. When I had done so, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) placed his hand upon my chest and said: O' Lord! Ward away the Shaitaan from him. Now when he looked at me, I found him to be dearer to me than my own .self and all the former rancour had been transformed into friendship and affection

I then engaged myself in fighting against the enemies and was so devoted in assisting the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) that even if my father .were to have stood up before me, I would have killed him too

After the battle had concluded, he (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) said to (me: What God has desired for you is better than what you had desired for yourself.(١

The Vindictive Hypocrite (۴

Rancour and malice are of the signs of hypocritical individuals and during the time of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny), they used to manifest .these in various forms

(Once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny

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.Paighambar Wa Yaaraan, vol. ٣, pg. ٢٩٨; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ٢١, pg. ١٥۶ -١

was seated in the mosque in the company of a group of Muhaajir (The Emigrants) and Ansaar (The Helpers), when suddenly Ali (peace be upon him) entered. Those present rose up in respect and warmly welcomed him till he (peace be upon him) sat in his .(usual place - near the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny

Meanwhile, two individuals in the gathering who were being suspected of hypocrisy, .began to whisper to each other

Observing them, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) realized why they were speaking amongst themselves. This enraged him so much that the signs of infuriation became manifest upon his face. He then said: By The One in Whose power lies my soul! None shall enter Paradise except he who loves me. And do know that one who imagines that he loves me but regards this person as an enemy .(Ali Ibn Abi Talib), is a liar

At this moment Ali's hand was in the hand of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) and the following verse was revealed(۱): O you who believe! when you confer together in private, do not give to each other counsel of sin and revolt and disobedience to the Messenger, and give to each other counsel of goodness and guarding (against evil); and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, to Whom you shall be (gathered together. (۲

The Liver Eating Hind (۵

In the battle of Uhud, Hamzah, the Chief of the Martyrs and the

۱ - ۹ .Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Mujaadilah (۵۸), vs يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ إِذَا تَنَاجَيْتُمْ فَلَا تَتَنَاجَوْاْ بِالْاثْمِ وَ الْعُدْوَانِ وَ مَعْصِيَتِ الرَّسُولِ وَ تَنَاجَوْاْ بِالْبِرِّ وَ التَّقْوَى وَ اتَّقُواْ اللَّهَ الَّذِى إِلَيْهِ تحُشَرُون

۲- ۲۷۰ .Hikaayat-ha-e-Shanidani, vol. ۴, pg. ۱۵۹; Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۳۹, pg.

uncle of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) killed nearly thirty people before he was eventually martyred.

Hind, the wife of Abu Sufiyaan, in maliciousness, had no parallel amongst all the ladies of her time. She promised Wahshi, the slave of Jubair Ibn Muti'm, great wealth and riches if he would kill Hamzah. Thus Wahshi lay in ambush for Hamzah, and pierced his dagger into Hamzah's body and killed him.

As per the instructions of Hind, he then split open Hamzah's stomach and removed his liver. When it was brought before Hind, she began to bite it and it is because of this that Hind came to be notoriously known as 'liver-eater'.

As per her promise, Hind gave all her ornaments to Wahshi. Then coming to the body of Hamzah, due to the malice that had existed in her heart, she cut off his ears, nose, lips and proceeded to make a crude necklace out of them so that she could take it to Mecca and display it to the ladies there. The other ladies of Mecca followed suit in mutilating the bodies of the other martyrs.

The vindictive Abu Sufiyaan too, when he stood over the body of Hamzah, pierced his spear into a corner of his mouth and said: O' disowned one! Taste this!(١)

٧٩. Weeping

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

فَلْيَضْحَكُواْ قَلِيلًا وَ لْيَبْكُواْ كَثِيرًا

"Therefore they shall laugh little and weep much"(٢)

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) had said:

بُكاءُ الْعُيُون وَ خَشْيَهُ الْقُلوبِ مِنْ رَحْمَهِ اللهِ تَعَالَی

"The

۱- Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. ۱, pg. ۶۱.

۲- Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Taubah (۹), vs. ۸۲.

weeping of the eyes and the fear of the hearts are of the mercy of God, The (Exalted”(1)

Short Explanation

One of the manifestations of divine mercy is weeping. Tears flow out for a number of reasons – out of attraction for those, who are attracted; out of sorrow for those who are in misery and out of worldly losses for those who are attached to the world.

If one weeps as a result of an inner change, it is due to Divine grace but if it stems from deceit (like the brothers of Yusuf), its pretentiousness shall become apparent and its evil effects manifest.

If a person cannot weep, he should put up an appearance of weeping in order that he becomes a recipient of divine mercy, especially so with respect to Imam Husain (peace be upon him) as it has been greatly emphasized to shed tears over him (peace be upon him).

Prophet Nuh (1

The name of Prophet Nuh had been A'bd al-Ghaffaar. After the lashing of the storm, the rising of the water and the drowning of the people, the archangel Jibraeel approached him and said: Some time back, your profession was carpentry, now turn to pottery!

When Prophet Nuh had constructed numerous pots, Jibraeel said to him: God has commanded you to break the pots. Nuh hurled some of the pots onto the ground and broke them – some of them he hurled lightly while others he dashed with reluctance and disinclination. A little later Jibraeel observed that he (peace be upon him)

۱- Tafseer al-Mu’een, pg. ۳۰۹.

?was not breaking any more pots and so questioned: Why don't you break them

He (peace be upon him) replied: My heart is unwilling to break them for I have spent a .lot of effort in constructing them

Jibraeel said to him (peace be upon him): O' Nuh! Do any of these pots possess life? Do ?.they possess fathers, mothers etc

Continuing, he said: The earth and water are from God. Your only contribution was that you exerted yourself and constructed them, but yet you are reluctant and unwilling to break them. So how did you permit yourself to curse the people and destroy them all despite the fact that they had been created by God and possessed ?...life and had fathers and mothers

Hearing this Nuh wept bitterly and intensely and hence came to acquire the title of (Nuh.(۱

Prophet Yahya (۲

Prophet Yahya (peace be upon him) once came to Bayt al-Maqdas and witnessed some clerics and priests wearing coarse garments and woolen caps. He requested his mother to arrange for him a similar dress so that he too could engage himself in worship with them. When his mother gave him the outfit, he engaged himself in .worship in Bayt al-Maqdas

One day, looking at himself in the mirror and observing that he had become very thin, he began to weep. God revealed to him: You weep because your body has become thin? By My Honour and Glory! If you were to possess the slightest awareness of the fire of Hell, you would have worn

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.Jaame' al-Nurain, pg. ۱۲۲ -۱

.a garment made of iron rather than one made of fabric

.Hearing this, Yahya (peace be upon him) wept immensely and intensely

One day his father, Zakariya (peace be upon him) said to him: Dear son! Why do you !weep so much? I had sought you from God so that you may be the apple of my eye

Yahya (peace be upon him) replied: But were you not the one, who had said that between Paradise and Hell lies a pass; none shall traverse it except those who weep ?intensely out of fear of God

Yahya (peace be upon him) used to weep so much that his mother arranged for him two pieces of felt, which would absorb the tears which flowed from his eyes. When they would become drenched with his tears, he would squeeze the felt and tears .would flow down from them from between his fingers

Zakariya (peace be upon him) would look at his son, raise his head towards the heavens and say: O' Lord! This is my son and these are his tears and You are the most .Merciful of the merciful ones

When Yahya (peace be upon him) would hear the name of Sukran (a mountain in Hell), in a state of utter perturbation and distress, he would rush out into the desert crying: Woe (unto me) due to heedlessness (with respect to God), and his father and mother (would rush out after him in the desert.(١

The Intense Weeping of Hadhrat Zahra (٣

The loss of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy

.Risaalah Liqaa Allah, pg. ١۵٧; Amaali Al-Saduq -١

progeny), the sacrilege committed in connection with Wilayah and the injurious blows .(to her) caused Hadhrat Zahra (peace be upon her) to become tearful

The people of Medinah used to be inconvenienced by her weeping and so said to her (peace be upon her): We are troubled by your wailings! Thus she was compelled to go .to the graves of the martyrs of Uhud for weeping and then return to Medinah

In another tradition it has been reported that the elders of Medinah approached Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and said: O' Aba al-Hasan! Fatimah weeps during the day and the night and none of us are able to sleep at night. During the day, we are unable to rest due to our involvement in earning the livelihood, while at night we are unable to do so due to her (peace be upon her) weeping. Ask her to weep either during the day or during the night. The Imam (peace be upon him) conveyed this message to her (peace be upon her) whereupon she said: O' Aba Al-Hasan! I shall not remain in this world for long but shall shortly depart from amidst the people. I shall .never be able to calm myself from my weeping till I am united with my father

Imam (peace be upon him) constructed for her, in the cemetery of Baqee' outside Medinah, a room of bricks and date-palm leaves by the name of Bayt al-Ahzaan. Every morning, Zahra (peace be upon her) would take her children

and go to Baqee' where she would weep incessantly amongst the graves; when night (would fall, the Imam (peace be upon him) would come and bring her home with him.(۱)

!Thirty Five Years of Weeping (۴

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: The fourth Imam (peace be upon him) wept for his father for around forty years, the days of which he used to remain in a state of fasting while the nights he would pass in worship. When it would be time for breaking the fast, his slave would bring food and water, and placing them before him, say: "Eat it". (Whereupon) he (peace be upon him) would say: "My father was killed in a state of hunger and thirst", and then he would weep so intensely that his food would become .moistened by his tears. And this continued for as long as he was alive

:One of the friends of Imam Sajjaad (peace be upon him) says

One day the Imam (peace be upon him) had started out for the desert and so I too went after him. When I found him, I saw him prostrating upon a rough stone, weeping and wailing and counted that he recited a dhikr a thousand times. He then raised his .head (and I observed) that his face and beard were moistened with tears

I said to him: O' My Master! End your sorrow and reduce your weeping! He said: Woe unto you! Ya'qub, the son of Ishaaq, was a prophet and the son of a prophet. He

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.Museebat-e-Buzurg, pg. ۴۷;Bihaar al-Anwaar, vol. ۴۳, pg. ۱۵۵, ۱۷۷ -۱

had twelve sons and when one of them was lost, he was so grieved that his hair turned white, his body bent over and due to the intense weeping his eyes lost their vision, and this despite the fact that his son was still alive. But I have seen my father, brother and seventeen persons from my family being killed and lying on the ground with my own eyes, so how can my sorrow end and how can the tears of my eyes (reduce?(١

The Weeping of Mercy (۵

From his first wife Khadijah, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) had six children while from his other wives, it was only Maria Qibti, who bore one son, whom the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) named .Ibrahim

Ibrahim did not live for more than one year, two months and eight days and passed .away in the month of Dhul Hijjah in the year ٨ A.H

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) was overcome with intense grief over the loss of Ibrahim and with tears flowing from his eyes involuntary, he was heard saying: The eyes are tearful and the heart is anguished (but) we shall not say anything, which shall anger the Lord. Surely we, O' Ibrahim, are grief-stricken .for you

A'aishah says: When tears began to flow from his eyes over his cheeks, a person said: "O' Prophet of God! You prohibit us from weeping whereas you yourself weep! The Holy Prophet

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ٢, pg. ۵٨٩; Anwaar al-Nu'maaniyyah, pg. ٢, pg. ٢٧ -١

peace be upon him and his holy progeny) explained: This is not weeping but mercy.) (One who does not exhibit mercy shall not be encompassed by mercy.(1)

80. Sins

point

Allah, the Wise, has said:

فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنبِهِ

"So each We punished for his sin"(2)

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said:

ليس من عرق يضرب و لا نكبه و لا صداع و لا مرض الا بذنب

"No vein is cut, nor is there (any affliction by means of) adversity, headache or sickness except as a result of sins"(3)

Short Explanation

Committing sins is a disease, but ignorance with respect to faults that result in sins is graver than the sins themselves.

Considering sins to be trivial and insignificant is one of the greatest sins. If an offence is related to God like one, who does not offer his prayers, it is God, Who shall deal with this person as per His discretion. But if it is related to the people, things can become really difficult. This is because if forgiveness is not procured from the offended one, things shall become all the more difficult on the Day of Judgment.

The treatment of a sin commences by means of repentance and seeking of forgiveness and concludes by resolving not to commit it again.

If the Shaitaan happens to tempt a person into committing a sin, he should immediately repent and resolve to refrain from such acts in the future in order that the effects of that sin do not get imprinted in his heart.

The Banishment of the Sinners (۱

There lived in the tribe of Bani Israel a

p: ۱۲۰

.Daastaan-ha Wa Pand-ha, vol. ۷, pg. ۷۵; Wasaail al-Shia'h, vol. ۲, pg. ۹۲۱ -۱

.Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-A'nkabut (۲۹), vs. ۴۰ -۲

.Jaame' al-Sa'adaat, vol. ۳, pg. ۴۷ -۳

licentious and sinning person, whose sinning and evil ways had left the people disturbed and exasperated as a result of which they turned to God to help them. God revealed to Prophet Musa to banish the youth from the city in order that the inhabitants of the city do not get caught in the punishment ordained for him.

When Prophet Musa banished him from the city, he proceeded to another city. It was ordered that he should be removed from that city too. This time, he sought refuge in a cave and fell sick with none to care for him in his state of sickness.

Prostrating before God, he wept in repentance of his sins and loneliness and beseeched: O' God! Forgive me! Had my wife and children been here, they would have wept at my wretchedness and desolation. O' God! You, Who have separated me from my father, mother and wife, do not burn me in Your fire (as a punishment) for my sins.

Subsequent to this supplication, God created angels in the form of his father, mother, wife and children and sent them to him. The youth was delighted to see his near ones near him in the grave and eventually died.

God revealed to Prophet Musa: Our friend has died in such and such place. Go, give him ablutions and bury him. When Musa reached the place, he found the person to be the same corrupt youth and so said to God: O' Lord! Is he not the same sinning

?youth whom You had ordered me to expel from the city

God revealed: O' Musa! I exhibited Mercy towards him. Due to his weeping, lamentations, sickness, separation from his land and relatives, confession of his sins (and seeking forgiveness, I have forgiven him.(١

Prophet Isa and Praying for the Rains (٢

Prophet Isa (peace be upon him) and his companions came out of the city and into the deserts to pray for the rains. There he (peace be upon him) said to them: Those of yo, who have committed sins should return to the city. Hearing this instruction all of them returned back except one person. Turning to him, Isa (peace be upon him) said: Have you not committed any sin? He replied: I don't remember having committed any except for one instance when, as I stood engaged in prayers, a lady passed by before me. I looked at her and my eyes continued to follow her. But as soon as she had left, I had thrust my finger into the eyes and, pulling it out, had thrown it in the direction .where the lady had gone

Isa (peace be upon him) said: Pray and I shall say Aameen. He prayed and the rains (began to pour.(٢

The Reason for this Sin (٣

Regarding this sin, i.e. female infanticide in the Arabian Peninsula, it has been :recorded that

Once, during the reign of a king, one of the tribes rose up in revolt against him. In order to crush the rebellion, he dispatched an army. The army marched upon them, ,plundering their property and taking their ladies as captives

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.U'nwaan al-Kalaam, pg. ٨٧; Jaame' al-Akhbaar -١

.Shanidani-ha-e-Taareekh, pg. ٢٢; Mahajjah al-Baidhaa, vol. ١, pg. ٢٩٩ -٢

.while the males fled from the scene of carnage

When the ladies were brought before the king he ordered his soldiers to take one of .them for themselves

Meanwhile, the men of the tribe who had taken to flight regretted their action and said to their poets: Go before the king and recite verses, which indicate our .repentance and speak of our apologies

The poets, arriving before the king, conveyed their message to him and requested .him to return the ladies to the tribe

The king said: We have distributed the ladies amongst the men. We have left the choice upon them whether or not they wish to return with you. If they desire, they can .return and if they desire, they can remain here

Qais Ibn A'asim had a sister, who had been given to a strong and handsome youth. .She refused to return saying: I shall not return to my tribe

However much Qais, who was one of the elders of the tribe, pleaded and requested, she refused to give in, whereupon he blurted: Daughters do not have loyalty in them. From now on, whoever gives birth to a daughter should bury her alive. It was from (this time on that this act turned into a custom.(١

The Expiation of Sins (۴

One of the Prophets of Bani Israel happened to pass by a person, who had died under a collapsed wall and who was in a state such that half of his body that lay protruding .from under the wall had been torn apart by the wild beasts

The

.Jaame' al-Nurain, pg. ٧٨ -١

Prophet passed that city and entered another one. There he witnessed that one of the elders of that city had died; shrouded with a brocaded cloth, with incense and amber imparting a beautiful fragrance, his lifeless body was placed in an expensive coffin !and a large crowd had turned up to attend his funeral procession

The Prophet said: O' Lord! You are the Just and Wise, and never approve of injustice. Why is it that the person, who had never been tainted with polytheism, should die in that manner while this person, who had never worshipped You, should die in this ?fashion

God revealed to him: It is just as you have stated, I am the Wise and never approve of injustice. However, that servant had some sins in his name and I desired that this death should serve as expiation for his sins so that he comes before Me, purified. As for that person, he had some good deeds in his account and I desired to reward him in this world so that when he comes before Me, he should not have any good deeds with (him.(۱

Hameed Ibn Qahtabah Taai (۵

:Abdullah Ibn Bazzaaz narrates

Hameed and I were known to each other. One day at the time of Dhuhr of the month of Ramadhan and dressed to travel, I went to his place. When he was informed that I .had come to meet him, he asked someone to bring me before him

Entering the house, I found him inside. Greeting him, I seated myself, whereupon food

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.Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. ۵, pg. ۲۹۹; Al-Kafi, vol. ۲, pg. ۲۸۸ -۱

was brought before me. He washed his hands and ordered me to do likewise so that .we could have our food. I thought to myself: I am in a state of fast

.He said to me: Eat the food

I said: O' Chief! It is the month of Ramadhan and I am not sick (so as to be exempted .from fasting). Hearing this, he began to weep and proceeded to eat his food

?When he had finished, I enquired: Why did you weep while eating your food

:He explained

One night during the time when Haroon al-Rashid, the Abbasid Caliph, ruled over the city of Toos, he summoned me. When I had arrived before him, he raised his head and looking at me, said: "In what measure do you obey the Caliph?" I said: "I obey him with .my life and wealth". He then lowered his head and permitted me to return

Hardly had I returned to my house when the Caliph's messenger arrived and said: The .Caliph wants to see you

I thought to myself: "Perhaps he has decided to kill me" and so recited: Inna Lillahi Wa .Inna Ilaihi Raajiu'n

When I had presented myself before him, he raised his head and asked: How much is ?your obedience to your Caliph

.I replied: With my life, wealth, wife and children

Hearing this he smiled and granted me permission to return home. I had hardly returned home before the Caliph's messenger arrived once again and said: The Caliph .summons you

,This time when I came before him

?he asked: How much do you obey your king

!I replied: By my life, wealth, wife, children and religion

This time the Caliph laughed and said: Take this sword and comply with what this .slave has to tell you

The slave led me to a house whose door was locked. He opened the door and I entered inside with him. Looking around I witnessed that it contained three rooms, .which were locked, and one well which lay in the middle of the courtyard

When the slave opened one of the rooms, I observed that it contained twenty people of the saadaat (descendants of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy .progeny)), young and old, fettered and in chains

.The slaved instructed: Kill them

As per his instruction, I killed all of them – the saadaat and the children of Ali (peace .(be upon him) and Fatimah (peace be upon her

When I had killed them, the slave pushed all their bodies into the well. He then opened the door to the second room and brought out another twenty saadaat to the mouth of .the well and I killed them too

Then opening the third room, he brought another group of twenty and I began to sever their heads from their bodies. I had severed the heads of nineteen persons from this group, when the last person, an old man with overgrown hair (due to his protracted stay in prison) said to me: O' Evil one! May you be accursed! What pretext would you

have on the Day of Judgment when you shall stand before our grandfather the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) after having killed sixty of his children.

Hearing this, a sudden tremor ran through my arms and body. The slave looked at me and said: Kill him. I killed him and the slave hurled his body into the well.

O' Abdullah! After having killed sixty persons from the descendants of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his holy progeny) how can prayers and fasts ever be of any benefit to me? I am certain that my abode is the fire of Hell.(١)

١- Kaifar-e-Kirdaar, vol. ١, pg. ٣٠٢; U'yoon Akhbaar al-Ridha, vol. ١, pg. ١٠٩.

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism-
places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,-
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Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and-
English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,-
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:Appreciation

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